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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE

Of the very Reverend

Mr. *James Fraſer* of *Brea*,

Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Culroſs*.

Written by Himſelf.

Dedicated by the AUTHOR,

To the very Reverend

Mr. *THOMAS ROSS*, Miniſter at *Kincardine* in *Roſs*.

Now publiſh'd at the Deſire of ſome Friends.

EDINBURGH,
Printed by THOMAS LUMISDEN and JOHN ROBERTSON, and ſold at their Printing-houſe in the *Fiſh-market*.
M. DCC. XXXVIII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE written Copy from which this Book was printed, being the Hand-writing of the Author, has the following Atteſtation prefixed to it by the Reverend Mr. *William Stuart* then Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Inverneſs*, but thereafter at *Kiltearn*.

" ACcount of the moſt remarkable Paſſages of Providence to
" Mr. *James Fraſer* of *Brea*, as written by his own Hand
" a long Time before his Death, which was at *Edinb.* *Sept.* 13th
" 1698, when the Sun was under a great Eclipſe betwixt 9 and
" 10 in the Morning; and the worthy Author of the following
" Sheets died between 9 and 10 at Night, whoſe laſt Words were
" in my Hearing, *I am full of the Conſolations of Chriſt*, &c. In
" Teſtimony whereof, this is written at *Inverneſs*, *May* 31. 1718, by

WILL. STUART
Miniſter there.

The Publiſhers to the Reader.

SUNDRY *Copies of the following* Memoirs *having been wrote out by the Reverend Author's own Hand for the Uſe of particular Miniſters and private Chriſtians of his Acquaintance, and handed from one Perſon to another, has raiſed a Deſire in ſuch as had not the Property of theſe Copies, but only the Uſe of them for ſome ſhort Time, that a fair and correct Edition of the Book might be printed, for their Benefit, and for the Benefit of others who have not had the Advantage to read it.*

This, together with the Deſire of ſome of the Author's Friends and neareſt Relations on Life, induced us to attempt this Publication; and we can aſſure you, that after comparing our Copy (which, as you'll ſee by the Preface, is dedicated to the Reverend Mr. Thomas Roſs *ſometime Miniſter at* Tayne, *with a Power to him to publiſh it or not as he pleaſed) with ſome other Copies, it is found to be the moſt correct, and in the neateſt Language; and this may be owing to the Reverend Author's beſtowing more particular Pains on it than on other Copies, becauſe of the Probability that it would ſometime or other be publiſhed.*

It has likewiſe this Advantage beyond the other Copies, that a particular Account of his Sufferings, by Impriſonment, &c. *(alſo written by his own Hand) is to be found at the End of the Book, which is not inſert in any other Copy of it that we have ſeen.*

And now, wiſhing you may, on reading of it, reap the Benefit the Reverend Author intended by it; we reſt

Your Welwiſhers.

THE PREFACE.

THE *Deſign of publiſhing this Part of the Works of the worthy Author is to do Honour to his Memory, and to gratify ſeverals, whoſe Savour of Piety hath indeared it to them; of whom we might mention ſome of high Diſtinction. If it be asked why it was not publiſhed ſooner, there is no other Reaſon to be given than that it was a Loſs, and that better now than not at all. By the Dedication to Mr.* Thomas Roſs *(a ſingularly pious Miniſter in the North) the Author ſeems to give Permiſſion to publiſh it: So that the World may be fully ſatisfied that the Work is genuine, being copied from that writ by his own Hand; of the Truth of which they may reſt aſſured, as can be atteſted by ſeveral Miniſters ſtill living. The Reaſon why Mr.* Thomas Roſs *did not cauſe publiſh it probably was, That he was at the Time he received it in Priſon at* Tayne, *and died there in Priſon, or ſoon thereafter.*

after. Such as had a tender Regard for the Author, wiſhed that this had been publiſhed at the ſame Time with the firſt Part of his Treatiſe on Faith; *particularly this would help to clear up that, as to ſome Things dark, and not ſo very obvious, at leaſt till it was thought proper to publiſh the ſecond Part of that Treatiſe. It was and is the Wiſh of many, that the reſt of his Life, particularly after his Settlement at* Culroſs, *had been got; for ſurely he wrote Diaries during Life: But, after all the Search poſſible, this could not be found. This now publiſhed is however very valuable, and will be ſo eſteemed by the truly ſerious and judicious, being a very rational Account of Converſion, as to Beginning, Progreſs and Iſſue, and of the Operation of the Spirit of God on the Heart; and ſuch an Account of Faith as cannot but pleaſe thoſe who love it, and may, by the Bleſſing of God, help to engage to it ſuch as hitherto had it not in Reality. There is perhaps no other Performance gives a more diſtinct Account of a ſupernatural Work of Grace; and it is thought not to be unſeaſonable at this Juncture, for reviving Piety and the Exerciſe of Grace, and convicting thoſe who make a Jeſt of theſe ſerious Matters. The firſt eight Chapters, dedicated to Mr.* Thomas Roſs, *were allowed by himſelf to be publiſhed: What follows is judged to be of good Uſe, and therefore now publiſhed with the reſt.*

Dedication by the Author,

To Mr. *Thomas Roſs.*

Reverend Sir,

" I Have thought the diſregarding of the " Lord's Providences to be one common " great Sin, not only among open Ene- " mies, but among profeſſed Friends of Chriſt, " *Iſa.* v. 12. *Pſal.* xxviii. 5. All God's Ways, " being Wiſdom and Goodneſs, are worthy of " Obſervation; but eſpecially thoſe wherewith " ourſelves are exercis'd (as having moſt Cer- " tainty and fuller Information of them, and con- " cerning ourſelves moſt) are much to be obſer- " ved, *Prov.* xxiii. 26. and theſe Providences " that concern our ſpiritual Eſtate moſt of any, " wherein the Lord hath appear'd more eminent- " ly, *Exod.* xii. 42. *A Night much to be obſerved* " *unto the Lord*, &c. I have in nothing been " more refreſhed, quickned and edified, than by " hearing and reading of the ſpiritual Experien- " ces of others of the Lord's People, *Heb.* xii. 1. " and in nothing more comforted and ſanctified " than by a ſerious recalling to Mind of the " Lord's Dealings with me. Three Ways doth " the Lord reveal himſelf; by his Word, by his " Works of Creation, and by his Works of " Providence: And 'tis Man's Happineſs to " know him thus revealed, *John* xvii. 3. And

" theſe

" theſe are the ſeveral Glaſſes thro' which the in-
" viſible God is ſeen, *John* iv. 16. God doth
" not reveal himſelf to any, that this might be
" kept under a Buſhel; for *the Manifeſtation of*
" *the Spirit is given to profit withal:* And we
" find the Lord's People in Scripture to be much
" in recounting to others their own Experiences,
" and God's Dealing with them; *Come, and I*
" *will tell you what the Lord hath done for my*
" *Soul,* Pſal. lxvi. 16. As alſo, the bleſſed Ef-
" fect this has had on others; *For this ſhall e-*
" *very one that is godly pray unto the Lord, in a*
" *Time when he may be found,* Pſal. xxxii. 6.
" The Conſideration of this, with the Deſires of
" others, and my Willingneſs to ſhew my
" Thankfulneſs unto the Lord, by an Acknow-
" ledgment of theſe his Favours at leaſt, and
" being ſome way hopeful that it might profit
" others, and to provoke thoſe exercis'd more
" nobly to manifeſt the Lord's Goodneſs unto
" them; I ſay, theſe Things have put me out to
" this Work at this Time, (O that the Lord
" would accept it off my Hand!) even to re-
" cord ſome Paſſages of Divine Providence ma-
" nifeſted towards me while here in my Pilgri-
" mage.

" I have dedicated them to you, Sir, becauſe I
" hold myſelf much bound unto you; and ſome
" little Thing of this Nature, whereby I might
" kyth my Gratitude, I thought incumbent on
" me to do. I look'd on you likewiſe as one
" who would with more Moderation and Diſcre-
" tion paſs over the Faults and Weakneſſes
" therein than others, to whom notwithſtanding
" I owe much Love: As likewiſe, you was the

" Occaſion of my undertaking this Work at this
" Time in a more eſpecial Way; and therefore
" I look'd for a more kindly Entertainment to
" this Child from you, who had ſuch Influence
" in bringing it to the World, than from others.
" I believe you will not fail my Expectation;
" make what Uſe you pleaſe of it, and either
" cenſure, correct or approve, divulge or hide it,
" as you ſhall think fit: I wiſh you Profit here-
" by, and am in Chriſt,

Reverend Sir,

Your loving Friend,

James Fraſer.

I ſhall reduce what I have met with to theſe Eight Heads; (1.) What hath been the Lord's Carriage to me before I knew any Thing of God, or had ſo much as the Form of Religion. (2.) Some Steps of God's Providence while the Lord was drawing me to himſelf; or ſome Preparation-work to my Converſion, while my Heart was not fully changed, but only had ſome Appearance of Godlineſs. (3.) Some Things concerning my Converſion, the Time and Manner; and what immediately followed. (4.) Of the ſad and long Decay that happened thereafter. (5.) Relate ſome Things touching my Recovery out of that Decay. (6.) Some Things that happened immediately after this Recovery, for the Space of four or five Years. (7.) Some Things relating to my preſent Condition, and ſome Things I have obſerved in my Experience. (8.) Some particular Mercies I have met with from the Lord at ſeveral Occaſions.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Touching ſome Things that happened to me from my Birth till I was Nine Years old.

§ 1. Was born in the North of *Scotland*, in 1639, *July* 29th, and was not like to live, but the Lord healed me; for the evil Humours broke out in Boils great and numerous, ſo that I was very wholeſom thereafter: My Diſpoſition was ſullen, and I loved not to be dawted, nor to wear gawdy Clothes; nor had I any wiſe Tales like other Children, ſo that I gave no Occaſion to my Parents to repeat them, as Parents uſually do with Fondneſs: For tho' my Parents were fond enough of their Children, yet my Temper was ſo peeviſh that I was no Dawtie; only at School I learned well, tho' now and then I ſtaid away.

§ 2. Even at this Time I ſhewed plainly that I had a Will to do Evil; for the Seeds of Wickedneſs did ſpring up, and appeared in many vitious childiſh Tricks: By all which the Neceſſity of Regeneration was evident, and that by Nature we are under the Power of Sin and *Satan*; *Even a Child is known by his Doings, whether his Work be pure, and whether it be right*, Prov. xx. 11. And theſe were all my Preparations and Diſpoſitions for Good,

§ 3.

§ 3. Yet the Lord was doing me Good all the while. I overpaſs common Mercies, and mention one that was very remarkable. My Mother being obliged to come South, to be out of the Way of a cruel Enemy who proſecuted her, lived with a Relation in a Burrough-town on the Coaſt-Side: I was very unruly, and therefore kept under ſome Awe and Reſtraint from wandring abroad when I pleaſed; but this increaſed my Deſire to ramble the more. At a Time I ſlip'd out, unknown to any, to a Garden where was a deep Well; when once I got out of Doors, I ran as hard as ever I could, and, not taking heed where I went, I fell in a By-path which carried me directly to the Well before ſpoken of, open above, and overgrown with Graſs, which did hide the Water from me; ſo that ere I knew I fell over Head in the Well, the Water being very deep; only my Hands laid hold on the Graſs that did grow on the Sides of the Well. Here I continued for a good Space, and would no doubt have drowned, if God had not ſent ſome to my Relief; for he that was appointed to wait on me not knowing whither I went, the mere Providence of God led him out to ſeek me in the Garden; and when coming to the further End of it, and deſpairing to find me, went back with Intention to ſeek me in the Town, which if he had done, I had periſhed for ever: But, the Lord directing him in his back-coming to the Well, he caſt his Eyes and perceived a Hand lying on the Graſs, which Extremity had cauſed me to do, and, looking more narrowly, found it was I; and ſo, addreſſing himſelf to my Relief, with much ado pulled me out of the Water,

ter, even ready to expire, and unable to help myſelf: And after the Water was poured out of my Mouth, and I had ſlept a while, I was as well as ever, thro' the wonderful Goodneſs of God. Oh that I may walk worthy of this Kindneſs, and that I may be preſerved to do him Pleaſure and Service! This happened to me during my firſt Appearance in the World.

CHAP. II.

Relating ſome Things concerning God's Dealing with me while under ſome common Work of the Spirit, and not fully converted, from the Time I was Nine Years old till I was Seventeen.

ERe I was really and fully converted, and drawn to God in Chriſt, I advanced four Steps; and in every one of them I had undoubtedly reſted, and ſo, miſſing of Chriſt, had undoubtedly periſhed, if I had not been beaten out of them: But the Lord ſeeing me ready to reſt in theſe, made them all to break under me, until at laſt he revealed his Son Jeſus to my Soul, whom to know is Life eternal.

STEP I.

Was the getting ſome Prayers by Heart, and ſaying of them in a formal Way Morning and Evening; ſo that now I was compleat as I thought: The Lord likewiſe then was drawing my Heart to what was good; for when I ſaid my Prayers Morning and Evening, and did not ſlight them,

them, then had I very much Peace and Comfort of Heart; and, when I omitted them, I was vexed in my Conſcience. Sometimes for a while together I would omit ſeeking of God thro' Sloth, and then would I be terrified with fearful Dreams, the Voice of which I thought was a Rebuke for omitting of my Prayers; and for a while thereafter I would be very zealous; and, when I did any Kind of Duty, I would not be troubled at all; and what Evil ſoever came upon me, I judged it to be for the Omiſſion of my Duties, which I looked upon as my greateſt Sin. By theſe Means, as the moſt meet and fit for me then, did the Lord ſeek to cauſe me follow Good, and to eſchew Evil.

But this continued not long, for I decayed; and ſo thereby I was beaten from this, as I was from other reſting Places. The Means and Occaſions were, (1.) Theſe who ſhould have overſeen me grew careleſs; they let me alone, and took no Account of me at all, but entruſted me to others: And therefore, *having no King, I did what was right in my own Eyes*, Judg. xvii. 6. (2.) The Lord, after he had ſeveral Times drawn me to the Yoke by fearful Dreams and ſome ſmall Convictions, finding then that the Impreſſions of theſe Things wore off me, that I ſlip'd out of the Collar again, and not intending that this ſhould be my Reſt, did not trouble me; and I not having Changes, but being let alone, let God and Duty alone, *Pſal.* lv. 19. (3.) Becauſe it was but common Grace, and my Soul being not united to Chriſt the Fountain, hence any Thing I had vaniſhed and periſhed, *John* xv. 4. (4.) Several Luſts not being deſtroyed, but kept,

kept, notwithſtanding of all my Duties, eſpecially Pleaſures, did in the End *choke* any Good that was ſown, *Luke* viii. 14. (5.) Evil Company did me likewiſe much Harm; and, thro' continual Converſe with them, I was transformed into their Image, 1 *Cor.* v. 6. and xv. 33. (6.) Becauſe, if this had not broken under me, I would have reſted here, and ſo, coming ſhort of Chriſt, would have periſhed, *Mic.* ii. 10. (7.) Becauſe I got not full Reſt and Contentment in God, and, wanting it in him, I behoved to go out to my Luſts for it at laſt, *Mat.* xii. 44. *The unclean Spirit goeth out wanting Reſt, and finding none, hence he returns.* (8.) Becauſe my Decay came by Degrees, and not all at once; and therefore ſtill I thought I would overtake it, and therefore ſaid, *Yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber:* And the longer I continued, the more indiſpoſed I grew, and greater Difficulties I found, *Prov.* xxiv. 33, 34. Thro' theſe Means mainly it was that I fell from this State, ſo as that I neglected Duty altogether, and at laſt did ſo without a Challenge, and gave but too much Way to other Sins, until God uſed new Means, and made another Aſſault, which he did ſhortly thereafter, thus:

STEP II.

Was the zealous Performance of ſome Duties, eſpecially Prayer. Before I had nothing but cunn'd Leſſons, but now I could bake my own Bread; and I know not how, and wonder ſtill at it, that, having ſo little Knowledge, I could yet be able to conceive a Prayer, and continue therein for ſome reaſonable Time, and not only ſo, but to delight in it likewiſe, and that in a greater

Meaſure

Meaſure than I did formerly. The Occaſion was this: My Father was ſick and like to die, and then ſent for me, having provided a Chaplain to the Houſe, who was to have the Overſight of me likewiſe; he was a godly, tender-hearted Man, but none of the deepeſt Reach: And his Zeal appeared ſtill the more, in that there was nothing among ourſelves but either Ignorance, Profanity or Formality; while he ſeemed to follow the Power of Godlineſs, for which he was generally hated and deſpiſed. He was a great Enemy to Vice, ſuch as Drunkenneſs, Sabbath-breaking and Swearing, Ills common enough in the Family and Country; and being continued our Chaplain after my Father's Death (for about that Time he died) he ſet himſelf to ſpread the ſincere Knowledge of God, and to do Good to others; and, for this Cauſe, inſtructed, reproved, and ſet them upon the Practice of Duties. I coming home, was delivered over to him, and to his Overſight; which was a great Grief to me, not reliſhing his Strictneſs. The firſt Night I would have gone to Bed without Prayers; but, as I was putting off my Clothes, he marked my Deſign, and commanded I ſhould fall down on my Knees and recommend myſelf to God ere I went to Bed, which I obeyed, and ſaid over my Evening-Prayer I had before got by Heart, he reading his Book in the mean Time.

When I was in my Bed, the Conſideration of my new Yoke did put me out to weep bitterly. The Man was lean and hard-favoured, and kept at a great Diſtance from me, and was very preciſe, an Humour I was never before acquainted with; as likewiſe, I was ſecretly fearing the Impoſition

of

of greater Burdens upon me. I comforted myſelf by a little Vent I gave my Sorrows.

But, to return: One Day, as we were talking more familiarly than ordinarily we were wont, he deſired to hear my Prayers. I thereupon repeated both Morning and Evening Prayers I had learned formerly: To which he giving Attention, and knowing both by the Matter, and my Way of repeating them, that they were a cunn'd Leſſon which I had ſome way learned from others, he told me, That, unleſs I had got the Spirit of God to teach me to pray, I could not go to Heaven; and that all other Prayers prov'd ineffectual: And thereupon, a while after, he in all his Exhortations to me addreſſed himſelf to ſpeak againſt ſet Forms of Prayer, and preſſed us that were Children to expreſs the pure and real Conceivings of our own Hearts, tho' we ſhould but utter five Sentences at a Time, and that this coming from the Heart was better and more acceptable to God than many and long Prayers taught us by others. He likewiſe taught us the Principles of Religion, the Meaning of the Belief, the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commands; and had a very ſtrict Eye over us, correcting us ſoundly for Curſing, Swearing, Lying and Sabbath-breaking; and obſerved our Ways narrowly, and took a ſtrict Account of us both as to what we learned and of our Practices, but eſpecially of me; ſo that in a ſhort Time, thro' the Lord's Bleſſing, I attained to ſome competent Meaſure of Knowledge, and left my former Ways, and ſet about ſecret and publick Duties, being about eleven Years at this Time; and Uſe made Duties eaſy; and the Peace I had in them, with the Hopes of a Reward, and the In-

Influence of a natural Conſcience, made me delight in them, ſo as in a ſhort Time I went about them no longer by Conſtraint, but did them of mine own Accord and willingly, and ſometimes would exceed what was enjoin'd me. Every Day, Morning and Evening, I would bow my Knee, and read ſome Portion of Scripture, and would pray a conceived Prayer at ſome Length, and with ſome Earneſtneſs, but had no ſpiritual Exerciſe, and had no Communication with God. I likewiſe began to comply with my Pedagogue better, and to love him better; and he ſeeing me profit both in Letters and Godlineſs, was more kindly to me: Nor could he be ſaid for all his Strictneſs to be ridgid to me, inſomuch that for the Space of a whole Year I remember not that I was twice whipt, and one Time was for ſwearing and playing at Cards. During the Time which he was with me, being a Year and a Half, I learned the moſt of my Grammar; but, this being not my Reſt, I fell grievouſly away from all this Profeſſion and Practice.

§ 2. The Steps of this Decay were, (1.) Wantonneſs and Lightneſs in Time of publick Prayers, thro' a fooliſh light Humour, and the Tentations of others; for I ſtudied not Heart-reformation. (2.) More ſlight Performance of Duties when I durſt not omit them: God ſuffer'd this to go with me. And therefore, (3.) I would ſometimes omit them altogether, when out of the Knowledge of my Governor. (4.) I began to play on the Sabbath-day with others, for which I got a Memorandum: For one Day, being the Lord's Day, the Children and I were playing ſome childiſh Rogueries; which our Governor

(good

(good Man) hearing, calls us up, and then very ſeriouſly endeavours to perſwade us and convince us of the Sin of Sabbath-breaking, and the Danger thereof, and gave us a large Exhortation, and thereafter enjoined us all to go to our Knees and confeſs our Sins to God, and ſeek Pardon thereof, which we obeyed; and for my Part, tho' at firſt I was conſtrained to it, yet I was ſerious both in acknowledging of Guilt, and ſeeking Pardon of Sin: And, when we had done, we were diſmiſt, being firſt exhorted not to do the like again; which produced a Reformation in us all for ſome Time. (5.) Thro' mine own evil Nature, which was never as then mortified, and the Counſel of others that were my Companions, I deſpiſed my Governor or Pedagogue, and did join with others in afflicting him, by Approbation and Deſire, tho' I durſt not do it ſo openly. And I remember, one Time he being out, an old Soldier who was pitifully cut and mangled in the Face had come to the Houſe, with whom we got ſome way acquaint, and put him in the Pedagogue's Chamber with a drawn Sword in his Hand, and an old red Gown on his Back, a Candle burning before him, and ſitting in a Chair with a Table on which he leaned, with a *Greek* New-teſtament in his Hand on which he ſeem'd to read; and all this, that, when the good Man would enter the Chamber, the Strangeneſs of the Spectacle might affright him, and that we might have Matter of ſcorning him; and for this Cauſe we followed him as he was coming to his Chamber after Supper: But, when he came in, he ſuſpected that it was a Trick, and went to the Soldier and took the Sword out of his Hand, and, putting him out

of Doors, he made him diſcover all thoſe that had a Hand in it, whom the next Day thereafter he made to crave Pardon publickly. O how mighty are Folks when they walk with the Lord! and how little do their Adverſaries gain of them! (6.) I proceeded from this to a more open Violation of the Sabbath, and played with the Servants at the Club on the Lord's Day, from ſix a-Clock till it was nine, my Tutor in the mean Time, I know not how, either remitting in his Zeal, or hoping when we were more ſettled in our Affairs (for we were to go South on the next Day) to rectify Things. (7.) When I came South, my Pedagogue became more rigid to me, and whipt me more frequently, I confeſs deſervedly; and I turned to hate him, and became ſtubborn, and would do nothing for him. My Father being dead, I was but too much countenanced by theſe with whom I was, who would not ſuffer him to take ſuch Courſe with me as he would and I merited; ſo that Things came this Length, that I openly reviled him, and avowedly omitted Duty. At laſt he was put away. (8.) He once being put away, I became worſe, and did no Good at all; I neglected Duty ſometimes for many Days together. (9.) I was much given to Lying, and made an ordinary Practice of it, ſo as that I could ſcarce ſpeak a true Word. (10.) I turned to mock Godlineſs ſometimes, tho' this did not proceed ſo much from an Habit and Nature and Inclination, as from the Tentations of others, whom, by this Means, I ſtudied to pleaſe. (11.) My Conſcience at laſt became ſear'd and inſenſible, ſo that I did all this with little or no Remorſe. (12.) Swearing little petty

ty Oaths of *Faith*, *Conſcience* and *Truth*, was ordinary with me. (13.) I broke out at laſt in the dreadful Sin of Blaſphemy, which I utter'd with my Tongue, playing one Afternoon at Cards, being about twelve Years of Age. (14.) I ſtole from my Mother's waiting Man five Shillings *Sterling* while I lay with him; and, being ſuſpected for it, I was denying it, but it was proven againſt me, and I was with Shame made to reſtore it. (15.) I curſed myſelf knowingly, in denying a Thing which yet I knew to be true. (16.) I became ſo wicked, as not content to omit Prayer on the Sabbath-day, and to talk idly as others did, I played the whole Day at the Dice, contrary to my Light, and my Conſcience even in the mean Time accuſing and condemning me. (17.) I was almoſt mine own Murderer; for being grievouſly awed at the Grammar-ſchool, and ordinarily whipt whether I deſerved it or not, and deſirous to be rid of this grievous Bondage, I knew no Way but to procure a Sickneſs to myſelf: And, for this Cauſe, I went out to the Croſs and bought green Fruits, and did eat nothing but that, and would oftentimes go naked all Night, which procured me a Flux, which I deſired, and which continued with me for two whole Years almoſt, which was near to have coſt me my Life; for, thro' Grief, and ill Diet and ill Guiding, I took a bloody Flux, in which I lay for two Days, which was all the Sickneſs I ever had. In a Word, I was clean gone, and nothing all this Time was dealing with me ſave only ſome ineffectual Checks and Movings upon my Heart now and then.

§ 3. This Decay did proceed from the ſame Cauſes with the former; yet I remarked theſe five

Things to have had moſt Influence on me: (1.) I prayed, but endeavoured not to take away my Sins; my Prayers never kill'd my Luſts, and therefore my Luſts kili'd Prayer: Like many now, that profeſs, and yet ſin on ſtill; that fear the Lord, and ſerve their Idols. (2.) My Governor decayed in his Zeal, thro' want of good Company, and thro' neglect of private Prayer in which I marked him deficient, and thro' too much Familiarity with the Domeſticks that did blunt his Zeal; and I think, ſeeing my Wickedneſs grow upon him and overmaſter him, he deſpaired of doing me Good: He ſlept, and *Satan* came in and ſowed Tares, *Mat.* 13. 25. (3.) Becauſe, when he was gone, none took care of me; and, *having no King, I did what was good in mine own Eyes.* None did reprove or correct me for my Faults, nor did look on my Soul at all, or put me out to Duty, but gave me looſe Reins; and, old *Jehojadah* being dead or gone, *I did Evil in the Sight of the Lord*, Judg. 21. 25. 2 Chron. 24. 2, 17, 18. (4.) Becauſe not followed with Terrors and Convictions, Peace and Eaſe did me ill, *Prov.* 1. 33. *Jer.* 51. 39. (5.) I found that evil Company did me much Harm; I learned their Ways; they hardned and encouraged me in an ill Courſe, and drew me from the Lord: For in my greateſt Decays, I mark this, that I was tryſted with carnal godleſs Company.

§ 4. Yet, notwithſtanding of this, I was not altogether left of God; for now and then I was in ſome good Mood, and the Spirit of God would ſtrive and draw me contrary to my Inclinations, ſo as now and then I would pray and read, and be affected: And this Good did proceed from theſe Cauſes;

Cauſes; (1.) Some extraordinary ſharp Convictions from the Lord on my Conſcience, that would put me out to Prayer and to get Peace; which Storm being over, I cared not for Prayer any more, *Acts* 2. 37. *Pſal.* 66. 3. (2.) Outward and grieveous Afflictions at School, by Reaſon of the tyrannical Rigidity of a certain Schoolmaſter I had, who delighted in the Scourging of Children, and would oftimes pick Quarrels with me and ſcourge me for little or no Fault at all; ſo that every Day almoſt I was ſure to be ſcourged, carry and do as I liked; which made my Life grievous and a Burden to me: And this in the Anguiſh of my Soul would cauſe me to pour out a Prayer, *Pſal.* 78. 35. *Iſa.* 26. 12, 16. (3.) Sometimes our Teachers would inſtruct us to pray; and then an Exhortation had ſome Influence on me, and would put me in ſome Frame, 2 *Chron.* 24. 2. (4.) I would out of Conceit ſometimes pray. I lingred on in this Condition three or four Years, until I went South again, in order to my going to the College.

STEP III.

§ 1. I was then going about the Form of all manner of Duties both publick and private, joined likewiſe with Reformation and Zeal. Before I was only taken up in Prayer, but now I made Conſcience of all Duties; and therefore meditated, read the Scriptures frequently, and kept the Sabbath very ſtrictly, and reading of good Books: And I left off all my old Sins and Ways, ſuch as Lying, Swearing, and made Conſcience of all Moral Virtues; I left my Gaming, my idle Talk, and became very temperate; and, if I at any

any Time failed, I would fall down on my Knees, and beg the Lord's Mercy. Yea, ſo zealous was I, that I endeavoured to gain others, and would reprove them for their Looſneſs: And this produced in me ſome Love to the Godly, ſo that I ſeemed both to myſelf and others a new Man, and every Thing to become new; and yet a Stranger to Chriſt, and lying faſt bound in a natural Condition. But the Occaſion of this Reformation and great Change was this; One Sabbath-day Afternoon, being then fifteen Years of Age, I read on a Book called the *Practice of Piety*, concerning the Miſery of a natural Man, the Torments of Hell, and the Bleſſedneſs of a godly Man, and ſome Directions for a godly Life: The Lord ſo wrought, and my Heart was therewith ſo affected and drawn, that without more ado I henceforth reſolved to become a new Man, and to live not only a harmleſs Life, but a godly and devout Life, and to turn my Back upon all my old Ways, and utterly to forſake them, and thereupon immediately to ſet upon the Practice of Duties. And in this Way and Condition I had marvellous Sweetneſs and Peace, judging and eſteeming myſelf really converted; and would ordinarily in my Prayers thank the Lord for giving me his good Spirit; and thought with myſelf, if I would but continue in this Condition to the End, I ſhould undoubtedly be ſaved. And, in a Word, I was a compleat *Phariſee*; and, for the Benefit of others, I will deſcribe the Frame of my Spirit under this Diſpenſation.

§ 2. I had the very Characters of a formal *Phariſee*: For, (1.) I look'd only to the outward Letter of the Law, and did endeavour an out-

ward

ward Conformity thereto; and, if I went about the outward Form of Duty, I fought no more, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. *Amos* 4. 4. (2.) I judged myſelf rather by the Length and Multitude of my Duties, more than by any other Thing in them, *Mat.* 6. 7. (3.) I reſted in Duties as the End, and made them not the Means to bring me to Chriſt: I looked on them as *opus operatum*; and therefore, when I did ſeek or pray for any ſpiritual Mercy, it was not the Things I ſought I was moſtly taken up with: Which did evidence itſelf to me in this, that when I prayed for any Mercy, when I got it not, nor any Promiſe for obtaining it, yet was ſatisfied; like theſe, *Iſa.* 1. 15. (4.) Whenever I ſinned, I ſatisfied God and my own Conſcience by doubling my Duties, and gave them to the Lord as Satisfaction: And then, as tho' the Blood of Chriſt had been applied, there enſued Peace; like thoſe, *Mic.* 6. 7. that would give *Rivers of Oyl for the Sin of their Soul*; and theſe, *Amos* 4. 4. who would, when they tranſgreſt, go to *Gilgal* and offer Sacrifice; and the Whore, *Prov.* 7. 14. *Mat.* 23. 14. (5.) Hence my Duties did never put away my Sins, nor did tend to this, but I *ſerved the Lord and my Idols*; and, if there was any Reformation, it was but the *Outſide of the Platter* that was cleanſed: But I neither ſaw, nor did hate, nor ſtrive againſt, nor overcome any Heart-corruptions; they never troubled me, 2 *Kings* 17. 33. *Zeph.* 1. 5. (6.) I was utterly ignorant of the Myſtery of the Goſpel; I neither knew nor ſtudied Faith not the Promiſes, nor Juſtification by imputed Righteouſneſs, being altogether ignorant of that, *Rom.* 10. 3. (7.) I was more troubled for the want of Holi-

neſs and the neglect of Duties than for the want of Chriſt himſelf, and loved Chriſt's Benefits better than Chriſt himſelf; I indeed *returned, but not to the moſt High*, Hoſ. 7. 16. (8.) I hated profane Perſons, and loved civil Men that had any Form of Religion; but did not reliſh the moſt ſtrict, eſpecially ſuch who expreſt the Power of Godlineſs, *John* 15. 18. (9.) Heaven was not ſweet to me, but I ever thought on it with Grief and Averſion, in reſpect of the conſtant uninterrupted ſpiritual Exerciſes they had there, and the want of carnal Comforts. I loved a Kingdom in this World, *Mat.* 20. 20. (10.) My Conſcience notwithſtanding after a little Profeſſion was unſatisfied, and there was a Worm gnawing at the Root of all this; and I could not be quit of this Aſſault, that for all this I might and would probably go to Hell. I had no great Security from all my Duties, and my Fears were ſtill alive; and ay I found, the more I did, they increaſt, *Mat.* 19. 16. the young Man cried ſtill out, *What ſhall I do to inherit Eternal Life?* (11.) Whatever I did was rather to ſatisfy Conſcience, than from Love to God, who was a Terror to me, and whom I could not otherwiſe repreſent to myſelf than as an angry Judge and an Enemy, whom I was ſtill troubled to ſatisfy. By all which it appears I had no ſaving Grace.

§ 3. I decayed from this and fell, and was beaten off it thro' theſe Means; (1.) My Pleaſures, Vanities and evil Company, to which I was not mortified, did draw my Heart away, *Hoſ.* iv. 11. *Luke* viii. 14. (2.) Sins did break out, ſuch as Curſing and Swearing and Carding, and that very frequently; ſo as I could not get Comfort in Duties.

ties. And this produced a Deſpair in me of the Works of my Hands, and this weakned me; my Duties were not able to bear up the Weight of my Sins: And therefore, ſighing, I went backward; and ſeeing there was no Hope, and loving Idols, I ſaid I would follow them, *Jer.* ii. 28. *Lam.* i. 9. *(3.)* Duties, thro' Proceſs of Time, began to be a Burden to me, eſpecially when they gave me not full Satisfaction nor Peace: I was wearied in the Greatneſs of my Way, and with labouring in the Smoke, and found no End in the Travail of my Soul, and therefore gave over; for this Thought remained ſecretly in my Heart, That I would go to Hell when all was done. I was indeed wearied and loaden with them, *Mal.* i. 13. *What a Wearineſs is in God's Service?* Why? Chap. iii. 14. *What Profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances?* *(4.)* By a certain Providence I was brought to ſee the Vanity of all this, which made me ſeek to another Mountain for Reſt; and, finding none, I turned a Seeker, tho' not in Judgment, yet really and truly in Practice; which made me deſpair not only of being happy by the Works of the Law which I had done, but even by theſe which I was to do; and ſo put from ſeeking it afterwards that Way. And this was my laſt Step and Diſpenſation of Providence I was tryſted with.

STEP IV.

Was, Being beat out of all Forms, I turned a Seeker, had no Principle, but lived in Hopes that God would reveal himſelf to me: Sometimes I prayed; I had ſome Comfort in doing Duties with any Affection and Life, which ſometimes I would

would win unto. The Occaſion was this; I was before this a Formaliſt; Duties were my Chriſt, which I began (thro' my prevailing Luſts and outward Tentations, and withal ſome ſecret Suſpicions of their Influence to juſtify me) gradually to be remiſs in: Yet I left not the Principle; for the Principle remain'd (notwithſtanding I fell ſhort in my Practice) That if I could abſtain from my ordinary Sins, keep the Sabbath-day, pray Morning and Evening, and do every known Duty, I ſhould be ſaved. And this continued until, being left by my Mother in a religious Family, I by Providence took up a Book called the *Seventeen falſe Reſts*; wherein I found the Vanity of Formality in Duties diſcovered very plainly, and ſome other Pitches and Lengths I had not attained to. I was afterwards confirmed in this by reading the *Confeſſion of Faith*, where it ſaith, *That tho' one ſhould form his Life never ſo exactly, according to Nature and Morality, without Chriſt he could not be ſaved.* This was enough; and the Spirit ſeconding it, convinced me I was quite wrong firſt, and had never known what true Grace was; and beſide, deſpaired ever of myſelf to come to that Eſtate of Grace: All my Refuges of Lies were ſhaken, and that which many Sermons for a long Time could not do, now in a Moment three Lines did.

§ 2. The Frame of my Spirit might be thus deſcribed; 1*ſt*, I thought all my Duties, and all I could do, inſufficient to ſave me, tho' as yet I ſaw not ſo clearly the Inſufficiency of Duties; and therefore did eaſily conclude, that all this Time I was in an unconverted Condition, and, if I died without a further Change than yet I felt, I ſhould

ſhould undoubtedly be damned. 2*dly*, I thought there was a certain State and bleſſed Condition to which all the Converted, and ſuch as had the Lord's Spirit, had come, and betwixt me and which there was a very great Cloud; and that I was, as it were, lock'd up from this. 3*dly*, I had ſome Hopes that God might do me Good, and bring me to this State ere I died. 4*thly*, I had in the mean Time ſome ſharp and terrible Convictions for particular Sins, but not for my evil Nature, and which did wear away without any remaining Effect. 5*thly*, I had no Principle, nor reſted in any Thing, but looked for ſome Divine Manifeſtation and extraordinary Revelation to my Soul. 6*thly*, I prayed ſometimes when the Spirit moved, and ſometimes not; yet had no Peace except when I prayed with Life and Affections; and then, tho' I reſted not in this, yet would it comfort me. 7*thly*, I thought that theſe that were regenerate lived a Life of perpetual Comfort and Glory, and always performed Duties with Life; and, when I would arrive at this Pitch, I would judge myſelf converted. And I further thought, that there was a marvelous Way of attaining to this; I looked for the Kingdom of Heaven to come with Obſervation. 8*thly*, I condemned all Men; for ſeeing the Unſuitableneſs of their Lives to their Principles, and their great Carnality, and hearing their fruitleſs Complaints and Confeſſions and Doubts, and expreſſing nothing of God's Love, I thought all came ſhort, and lived in an empty Form. 9*thly*, I thought them the beſt Preachers who preached moſt methodically, and with greateſt natural Quickneſs, but underſtood not ſpiritual Preachers.

10*thly*, I ordinarily ſlighted Duties, and fell in Out-breakings of Swearing, Lying, and idle Talking and Carding; Pleaſures were my Idol to which I was not mortified; I had no Principle nor Centre. 11*thly*, I mourned for Sin, not becauſe it offended God, but becauſe of the Conſequents of it; and this made me conclude I was not ſincere: And I thought, if once I could win to hate Sin becauſe it offended God, that then I was ſincere. I drove this Trade for the Space of three Years almoſt, wherein I was ſettled in nothing but in a waiting and ſeeking Condition.

§ 3. During the Time I was under the former Diſpenſations, I was tryſted with ſome wonderful Providences, wherein much of the Power and Goodneſs of God, in delivering me from terrible Tentations to Deſpair, did viſibly appear. They were theſe: *Firſt*, A Year and a Half after I had blaſphemed, being in my Bed, the Thoughts of that grievous Sin came to my Mind, and that with ſuch Horrour as made me tremble with an unaccuſtomed Fear; this was the firſt Sting of Sin. I eſſayed to pray, but could not get my Mouth opened; there did a Number of Blaſphemies and Curſings run in my Mind with great Horrour and againſt my Will, which I thought was like the Devil in me. I had not Knowledge, and therefore was the more troubled; for I was not fourteen Years of Age then. The more theſe Thoughts did run in and preſent themſelves to my Mind, my Horrour was increaſed, inſomuch that the Horrour of it was ſo great, that at laſt it became intolerable; and then, in my Extremity and in great Anguiſh of Spirit, I

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Lord pitied me, and opened my Mouth to pray for Help, which I did moſt affectionately, and with great Liberty and Abundance of Tears, which did by a ſecret Vertue charm and calm my confuſed Soul; for now did I by this conceive that I was not quite forſaken of God, as likewiſe the terrible Apprehenſions I had of God began to ceaſe, and I ſlept till the next Day: But my Troubles began the next Day again, and I thereby was made more devout, ſo as I read on godly Books; and, caſting the Book up at Random, the firſt Paſſage that I met with was this, "When *Satan* caſts in blaſphemous Thoughts "in thy Heart, be not diſcouraged; for they are "not thine, but *Satan*'s." Here was a Well of Water; tho' my Eyes at firſt could not ſee it ſo full, yet it did ſomewhat help me, and by it now I perceived much of God's condeſcending Nature: In Proceſs of Time, when I began to be leſs troubled, theſe blaſphemous Thoughts did wear away, and ſo did my Trouble likewiſe.

A *ſecond* wonderful and merciful Providence was this: In the Time I was a Seeker, and heard them ſpeaking of the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and that it was unpardonable, I began preſently to have ſome weak Suſpicions that I had ſinned that Sin, when I had recalled my Blaſphemy to mind; but concluded nothing certainly, becauſe I knew not what that Sin might be: And all this Time it was my Exerciſe to enquire at ſuch as had Knowledge, what that Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt might be, but was not ſatisfied, and I had no Books that ſpeak of that Sin at all, and ſome Places of Scripture in the Evangeliſts that treat of that Sin could not ſolve my Scruple;

but

Malice in it and Deſpite: Upon which, for the Space of ſome Hours, a more violent Storm did break out than any I had ever felt; I looked on myſelf as one that had undoubtedly ſinned unpardonably; I ſaw in God's Countenance Terror, Wrath, Hatred and Vengeance; and ſome of my natural Enmity againſt the Lord did break out likewiſe; ſo that I ſtruggled, murmured and freted againſt God, like the Damned in Hell, for ſuffering me to ſin unpardonably. Deſpair and Want of Hope is terrible; I was as if in Hell; no viſible Thing did uphold me, only the ſecret Power of God; I was in an hourly Expectation when *Satan* ſhould come and take me away; and it was beaten upon me with a mighty Impreſſion, that I was delivered to the Devil. It was impoſſible for me to pray; for, in approaching to God, I approached to my Torment. I ſought with Sleep to paſs away that Night, the ſorrowfulleſt that I ever endured, and ſo to wear away my Horrours, and hoped the Morning would ſome way cheer me: But I could not ſleep, my Horrour ſtill increaſed, and Hopeleſneſs was the Sting of all my Evils. It entred into my Head once to put Hands in myſelf; but this Temptation did not take, nor ſinge ſo much as a Hair of my Head, but looked on it as a mad Thing to torment myſelf before the Time; it was Hell I feared, and ſhould I then run to it? At laſt, after much Toſſing, and hardly Praying, it pleaſed God ſomewhat to allay my Horrour with theſe Conſiderations, which I thought ſome good Spirit ſuggeſted unto me: *1ſt*, Thou knoweſt not how thou ſinned, nor remembers the Frame of thy Heart at that Time, whether thou didſt utter

theſe

theſe Words of Blaſphemy in Rage, or out of unwatchful Folly; and wilt thou then condemn thyſelf upon Uncertainties? This was rational, but did not calm my Heart; it, like cold Water caſt on a Burning, did for a Time eaſe it, but did not heal, becauſe little of God was here. 2*dly*, It was ſuggeſted to me, That thoſe who had ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt never thought ill of it, nor rue that they did ſin it. It was replied, There may be a Ruing and a Repenting, becauſe there may be a fearful Expectation which may make them rue what they have done. 3*dly*, At length the Lord brake in with this, It is certain, that theſe who have ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt can never ſincerely repent. Yes, ſaid I, that is true. Well, ſaid the Lord, take but this Counſel: Suſpend for a Time judging of yourſelf, neither concluding that your Sin is pardonable or not, till you ſee whether God will give Repentance or not; and therefore, while the Lord ſpares you Life, try him with this, and ſeek Repentance of him: If he give Grace, then mayſt thou be certain and infallibly perſwaded that thou haſt not ſinned this Sin; but, if not, and that God give you not Repentance, you may conclude that you have ſinned it, and will be damned, and your Impenitency will damn you however: To deſpair will do no Good, and by this Courſe you can be no worſe than you are; tho' thy Condition be already deſperate, what loſeſt thou by this? you may get ſome Peace in the mean Time. This prevailed; and the Lord by it calmed my Spirit, ſo as within a few Days all the Impreſſions of this

Temptation were worn away: But I little minded to endeavour Repentance.

§ 4. During this Time I lived in diverſe Sins; as, *1ſt*, In ſeeking and living in Pleaſures. *2dly*, Omitting of Duties, and excellent Occaſions of powerful Sermons that were at that Time preached by the ableſt Men in the Kingdom; as likewiſe I neglected to improve the Society of godly Chriſtians. *3dly*, Neglecting my Book, and miſpending my Time. *4thly*, Continuing in a Courſe of Enmity againſt the moſt Godly, and defaming them ſometimes falſly. *5thly*, Playing at unlawful Games, as Cards, Dice, and other Lotteries, and that in a Place where ſevere Laws were made againſt them. *6thly*, Defaming of my Neighbours with Paſquils and light Poems. *7thly*, Carnal and light in my Converſation. *8thly*, Waſting and ſpending much Money unneceſſarily. *9thly*, And once overtaken with Drunkenneſs, fourteen Days ere I was converted.

§ 5. From all this I learn, *1ſt*, The Time of Youth is the moſt fit Seaſon to ſeek God. I found much Tractableneſs in myſelf while I was young, *Lam.* iii. 27. *Eccl.* xii. 1. *2dly*, That the beſt Mean under Heaven for ſeaſoning young Ones with the Knowledge of God is the Admonition, Care and Watchfulneſs of Superiors; this was the only Thing that did me Good, *Eph.* vi. 4. *Gen* xviii. 19. *Deut.* vi. 7. *3dly*, That the Lord doth uſually bleſs this Mean with Succeſs when it is made Conſcience of, *Gen.* xviii. 19. *Abraham* ſhall teach his Children, and they ſhall keep my Commandments. The Pains of others upon me had ſome Effect on my Spirit, even

even whilſt much did not appear to others? *4thly*, There is a Day of Chriſt's Power; Religion hath a Time: Theſe who are now ſtamp'd with Hell, were then profeſſing ſomewhat, and going about the Means, and ſtrict in obſerving the Lord's Day, *Eccl.* iii. 1. Every one got a Touch of the Wind of God's Spirit. *5thly*, God is at much Pains with Sinners ordinarily ere he draw them fully, wholly and effectually to himſelf. I was far from Converſion at this Time; only I learned that there was a certain glorious Eſtate of Grace to which ſome were brought, and that I was a Stranger unto it. *Rev.* iii. 20. He ſtands and knocks. *Iſa.* v. 4. *What more could be done to my Vineyard?* Tho' there were no more, ſurely I am much bound to the Lord for his Pains he takes on me. *6thly*, God is good to the Unthankful and Evil when they are in Extremity. He heareth the Cry of Nature, and did hear me in my Extremity when I cried to him, *Pſal.* cvii. 17, 18, 19. *Iſa.* lvii. 17, 18, 19. *7thly*, Let never any Man upon any Account neglect the Uſe of Prayer, or other Means, tho' it ſeems never ſo unreaſonable; for againſt Hope, Senſe and Reaſon, when I was put to Prayer, tho' there was nothing but the Cries of oppreſs'd Nature, it was not in vain, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. *Pſal.* lxxviii. 36, 37, 38. 2 *Kings* xiii. 4, 5. *8thly*, 'Tis ordinary to ſeek to other Phyſicians and Means, and to reſt on and cloſe with them, ere there be a Coming to Chriſt, *Hoſ.* v. 13. *9thly*, All falſe Reſts will fall, and gilded Grace will wear away, and muſt do ſo without Chriſt; partly becauſe of their decaying Nature, 1 *Pet.* i. 24. *All Fleſh is as Graſs, and the Glory there-*

of withereth; partly becauſe, while theſe continue green and freſh, the Soul will not ſeek to come to Chriſt: None of the bad Grounds came to Perfection, *Mat.* xiii. 10*thly*, A Soul that is a Stranger to God and true Converſion, may get and receive ſome great Favours and Deliverances at the Lord's Hand, and may have particular and clear Experiences of the Lord's Power and Goodneſs, as *Hagar*, and may be therewith affected, *Gen.* xvi. 13. 11*thly*, None can be ſo bad but they may be worſe; there is no Bounding or Term of Sin, 1 *Kings* xxi. to 16th *v.* 12*thly*, I find the Neglect or careleſs Performance of private Duties, eſpecially Meditation and Prayer, to have ever a great Influence on all the Decays that happen to a Perſon, *Exod.* xvii. 11. *Pſal.* lvi. 9. *Mat.* xxvi. 41.

CHAP. III.

Declaring the Way and Manner of my Converſion, and of ſome Things that happened then and immediately thereafter.

SECT. I.

Of the Converſion itſelf.

§ 1. ABOUT the Time that the related Providences happened unto me, being at the Univerſity, and being at the Age of Seventeen or Eighteen Years, our Miniſter propoſed to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, of which he gave Warning

the

the Sabbath preceeding the Celebration thereof, I purpoſed (I know not upon what Ground) to partake thereof. I had always a reverend Eſteem of that Ordinance, and was under the deep Impreſſions of eating and drinking my own Damnation: I knew I was in an unconverted Condition, and that, if betwixt that Day and the next Lord's Day I were not converted, that I would draw on myſelf a very grievous Evil, and that eating unworthily I might give over Hopes of ever thereafter being converted: The Lord did therefore put it in my Mind, both by ordinary and extraordinary Means, to do my utmoſt Endeavour to win to a converted Condition; nor was I of the Judgment that Converſion was within the Compaſs of my own Power, but I hoped, that, doing Diligence, the Lord might help; and for this Cauſe ſet to Work immediately, beſeeching God that he would once effectually work upon my Spirit, ſeeing all former Means had been uſed in vain. I went to Sermon, and I found a better Reliſh in the Sermon than I had wont to find, and had an Ear to hearken more attentively than at other Times: After we were gone from Church I ſpent the reſt of the Day in ſpiritual Exerciſes, and ſo was continuing very diligent in ſeeking the Lord, growing daily in the Knowledge and Love of his Ways; ſeeing a Beauty, and finding a Reliſh that I never knew before. Books and Diſcourſes of practical Divinity were only ſweet, and ſo were ſpiritual Exerciſes; I had now taſted of the Wine, but had not bought it.

§ 2. But on *Wedneſday* be Six a-Clock at Night, finding by Marks I had read in Books that I was not converted, and not getting that

extraordinary Thing I expected, and withal fully reſolved to partake of the Sacrament, I feared that I ſhould eat and drink Damnation to my own Soul, and then that the Remedileſneſs of my Condition would be out of doubt. Sometimes I thought that I would ſuſpend Communicating at that Time; and, if this Reſolution had prevailed, I would not have troubled myſelf with Religion at that Time: For this was the Day of my Viſitation, and this made me take Pains even to eat and drink worthily. Therefore, hoping ſtill for ſome Good, I continued in my Reſolution; but, as I ſaid, when I ſaw all in vain, and that I met not with what I expected, tho' I met with more than ever I did before, Diſcouragements did quite overwhelm me, and Fears of drawing on more Guilt did load me; and, withal, this Apprehenſion lay heavy on me, and haunted me like a Ghoſt, That it was in God's Mind never to do me Good: So that Fear, Diſcouragement, Vexation, Deſpair, and ſome Horrour and Grief, did all take hold of me. I reſolved to ſet the next Day apart for Faſting, and therein to ſeek God, hoping that theſe extraordinary Means might do ſomething. Hanging therefore by this ſmall Thread, I went to Prayer with many ſad Complaints; and the Lord, while I was like the prodigal Son yet a great Way off, ran to meet me. I addreſs'd myſelf to ſpeak to the Lord Chriſt, and then was there a Goſpel-view given me of him; and ſome Conſiderations and Repreſentations of Chriſt were brought into my Mind, That he was the Mediator, a Friend and Saviour to poor Sinners, their only Helper, the Way and the Truth and the Life that died

for

for them, and One willing to be reconciled. What ſhall I ſay? While I was thus exerciſed, a marvelous Light ſhined on my Underſtanding, and with the Eyes of my Mind, not of my Body, I ſaw that juſt One in his Glory and Love and Offices, and Beauty of his Perſon; ſuch a Sight as I never did ſee any Thing like it, and which did ſo ſwallow me up as I turned ſpeechleſs, and only ſaid, What is this? And where am I now? The Glory, Love and Lovelineſs of Jeſus, revealed to me, did very ar exceed all that ever I ſaw or could ſee in the World, inſomuch that there was no Compariſon; I was drawn by this: And after I had recovered I ſaid, O Lord, thou haſt overcome me! Heart and Hand, and all that I have, is thine; I am content to live and die with thee. Begone, poor World and beggarly Vanities, and deſpiteful Devil and Fleſh, I will ſerve you no longer; I know now of a Maſter and Lover, to whom henceforth i will dedicate myſelf. Now are all my Doubts looſed; and now I ſee that I have not ſinned th Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. What ſhall I now do for the Lord? Let Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men praiſe him; for he hath looked graciouſly upon me, and that in my low Condition. What am I or my Father's Houſe, that thine Eye ſhould be caſt on me? There followed upon this ſuch Liberty as I thought I could ſpend the whole Night in Prayer. Now was I perſwaded that I was converted, and was come to that Pitch which formerly I wanted; and all the Clouds evaniſhed which were betwixt the Lord and my Soul. This continued in its Strength only for a Quarter of an Hour, and then it abated as to its Meaſure, tho' not altogether;

but ſomething remained. After I roſe from Prayer, I went to the Fields, and there ſang Songs of Triumph: I comforted myſelf in my new Condition, and propheſied to myſelf much more, ſeeing theſe were but the Beginnings: Nor did I think that my Happineſs could be equalled by any; and now was I fully content to communicate. I longed for ſome quiet Place to pour out my Soul unto the Lord, for I thought he would return again; but he did it not. I bore the firſt Repulſe, hoping that at laſt the Lord would return: All Scruples, Fears and Doubts were baniſhed. I went to Bed; and when I was lyen down, Now, ſaid I, ſleep ſecurely, and ſo thou mayſt ſeeing thou art reconciled to God. Never could I do it one Night before; but now let Heaven and Earth go together. I thought now no Scriptures for me but ſuch as were directed to Saints, and therefore read ſome Chapters of the Second Epiſtle of *Peter*, but found little Life: This did ſhake me. I read ſome on *Iſaac Ambroſe*, and ſome Marks he had of worthy Communicants, of Faith, Love and Knowledge, and the Evidence of the Spirit ſhining. I thought I had theſe Marks; yet the withdrawing of my Life and Glory raiſed Doubts in me, until by Prayer again I got ſome of the Glory of Chriſt ſeen, which revived me; and I was much affected with reading *Iſaac Ambroſe* his *New Birth*, and I thought there was never any Thing ſo ſweet.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of ſome Tentations and Clouds which thereafter followed, and how delivered out of them.

§ 1. THE Lord withdrawing that comfortable Preſence which I enjoyed before, humbled me very much; and Miſts began to ariſe, and the Sky to darken: But that which indeed raiſed my Exerciſe to ſome Height, was reading on *Shepherd*'s *Sound Believer*; wherein he deſcribes the Manner of true Converſion: And as I read, I apprehended that God had not dealt thus with me, and that I had not found ſuch a Work on my Spirit as he deſcribes (this was thro' miſunderſtanding him) and therefore that I was not as yet converted; and therefore that my communicating would be ſtill an eating unworthily; And ſeeing what I met with was not Chriſt, I knew not who he might be, or what I ſhould do; and ſo was turned deſperate. This wrought Sorrow in my Heart for a natural Condition, and I ſought the Lord in Heavineſs of Heart; and indeed was not idle: But Diſcouragements increaſed, and ſtill nothing but Abſence, inſomuch as I thought my Condition worſe than ever. I ſought the Lord Night and Day, as much thro' Senſe of the Danger of the Want of him, as thro' any Thing elſe; but all would not do: Neither weekly Sermons, Books, Counſels nor Prayers, could draw Jeſus till his Hour was come. I was then but ignorant, and knew not how to live by Faith; and, wanting Senſe, was diſcouraged. The *Sabbath* came,

on

on which the Sacrament was to be given; my Fears and Sorrows increaſed, and I was tempted not to communicate. There was one Mr. *R. B.* ſerving the Tables; he proponed an Objection which ſome doubting Chriſtians might have: *Many will ſay*, ſaith he, *Oh! I fear to draw on more Guilt in my communicating. But, Oh!* ſaid he, *would to God that there were many of this Judgment! But I will tell thee, poor doubting Thing, whether thou mayſt come or not: Tell me, Waſt thou ſeeking Chriſt or not this Week?* Yes, quoth I quietly. *'Tis like thou haſt found ſomething then: And did Chriſt drop in Myrrhe in the Lock of the Door of thy Heart ere he went away? Know it, poor Soul, he will come again, for that is his Token; and thou mayſt come here, and in his Name I invite thee.* This drew me to come, tho' I found no ſenſible Preſence at the Time; and thereupon enſued great Fears. Yet the ſame Mr. *R. B.* did in the Afternoon encourage me again, ſo as I reſolved to pluck up my Heart again.

§ 2. I finding theſe Diſcouragements did no Good, and that comforting of my Heart did no Ill, did reſolve to cheer myſelf, and uſed ſome general encouraging Conſiderations to myſelf, and therewith was ſome way ſtrengthned to go about my Generation-work. Thou art now engaged to be the Lord's Servant; wait upon him, and truſt thy Reward unto him. This Advice did no Ill. Thereafter Sermons were very ſweet unto me, and ſo was the Exerciſe of all ſpiritual Duties, ſo as I grew in the Knowledge of the Ways of God; and the more I knew, I was the the more delighted in him: Every ſpiritual Duty did

did reliſh with me, and I was not well but when out of one Duty into another; yea, the moſt cold Prayers and Diſcourſes anent Godlineſs were ſweet, and Opportunities of Prayer and getting Good were highly prized by me. I began within a Month's Time thereafter to be more ſlack; but the Lord warned me of it, and I mended my Pace.

§ 3. Thus was the everlaſting Seed ſown that was the Light of Glory then ariſing upon my Soul: But this did not long continue; for thereafter ſhortly there aroſe a more grievous Storm, and of longer Continuance than any I had met with yet: For, the Sacrament being to be given in the Town about that Time, I reſolved to partake thereof, to ſee if I could get any Thing from God; and for this Cauſe prepared myſelf diligently, and went about the Work of Self-examination: But being but young, and having ſmall Experience of my own Heart, I could get little Clearneſs; however this Exerciſe ſtirred up ſome Things ready to die in me, and I did ſtill grow in the Knowledge and Love of the Truth; until one Afternoon, which I had ſet apart for ſeeking of God, I was reading on *Luke* xxii. Chap. where Chriſt did eat the Paſſover with his Diſciples; and reading theſe Words *(and the twelve Apoſtles with him)* I know not how it came to paſs, but, reflecting on my Deadneſs in reading ſuch Love as this, I concluded I had no Grace; and withal obſerving how Chriſt was ſo familiar with his Apoſtles, and how unkind to me, the Apprehenſions of Diſtance and Separation from Chriſt were ſo fearful, that incontinently the Wind was up very boiſterous, and I was brought

brought again to the Rack. Then did my evil Nature diſcover itſelf to me, and then did I murmur and fret againſt God, that was ſo kind to others, and yet kept ſuch Diſtance with me: I envyed, as I thought, the very Apoſtles with ſome Deſpite, as I conceived. Fretting and Murmuring did but like Rain increaſe the Floods, and nowiſe abate them; ſo that in Sorrow and Bitterneſs of Heart I walked up and down for want of God whom I could not find, nor knew how to ſeek, and under the ſenſible Apprehenſions of his Wrath and of an unconverted Condition. All theſe Things, with the fearful Frame of my Spirit, did put me in great Horrour, ſo that I utterly loſt almoſt all Hope: But theſe Winds thro' ſome Proceſs of Time were calmed, and in one of my calm Fits I read on *Shepherd*'s *Sincere Convert*, this being the firſt Time I ever ſaw it; I had not read four Leaves of him when I was thrown on my Back: The firſt Arrow that did ſtick in my Reins, and went into my Heart, was from theſe Words, *The Children of God do nothing for fear of Hell; they lothe to live like Slaves in* Bridewell, *and like Dogs for fear of the Whip.* Upon this my ſlaviſh Acting was diſcovered, and therefore I concluded that wanting that kingly Spirit that acts out of Love, which indeed as then did not appear, being under a ſtrong Fit of the Spirit of Bondage; I ſay, not finding this, I concluded I was yet *in the Gall of Bitterneſs.* I went after Dinner thro' the Fields, and read that Book all through; and the Power of God was preſent: And reading what Lengths Hypocrites might come, and the Sadneſs of an unconverted Condition,

dition, and the great Difficulty of ſaving Converſion, I was wounded through, and through; my Condition was now worſe than ever, and I was brought to a certain Deſpair; only I knew not what to think of the laſt glorious Sight I had of Chriſt: But, as I read forward, I was put out of that Doubt. In the ſame Author's Diſcourſe of a falſe Spirit, which is a Means by which a falſe Peace is begotten; he goes on and compares it with the Spirit of God, and ſaith, *That as the Spirit of God doth humble, ſo likewiſe doth the falſe Spirit; and that this falſe Spirit did reveal Chriſt, and fill the Soul with glorious Apprehenſions of him; ſo that the Man ſeems to be wrapt up to Heaven, and hence cries, My Lord, and my God.* Here was all thou met with, ſaid my Conſcience; this did put the Buſineſs out of all Doubt, and I counted what I met with formerly but a Deluſion of *Satan*: And here all Props were taken away, and by this Means a Breach was made to all Tentations to enter in; and the Devil ſeeing his Time, entred in with a whole Sea of Horrours. Then was brought to my Mind my old Sin of Blaſphemy again, and vehemently urged that I had ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; which with ſuch Violence he preſſed, as I could get nothing ſpoken for myſelf. And that which did heighten all this was, that the Law brake in upon me, *that Sin might become exceeding ſinful, and wrought in me all Manner of Diſobedience*; for my Heart murmured, fretted and ſwelled againſt God for guiding me thus; and, having terrible Apprehenſions of him, I could not love him: And now, ſaid Conſcience, ſee how thou ſmells al-

already of Hell; how canſt thou imagine that God will look upon thee that haſt ſuch a curſed Nature? The Brand of the Reprobate is upon thee; why wilt thou therefore pray or hope any more? Yet notwithſtanding would I pray, and that frequently; I know not what put me out to to it. Many Times did I grovel on the Ground, and ſought his Favour, Pity and Compaſſion; then was it that my Tears were my Meat; then was Prayer Bitterneſs to me, and my Mouth cloſed, and I as it were bound with Bands; for God was never more terrible than when I approached to him in Prayer. I remember, one Day, praying out in the Fields, I had this Expreſſion; Lord, ſaid I, if thou wilt for nothing elſe compaſſionate me, yet compaſſionate my young Years; and yet I know not how thou canſt break thy faithful Word, who haſt ſaid that ſuch as ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſhall never be pardoned. Nature ſeeks its own Preſervation, and therefore, having no other Shift to make, I applied myſelf to the Lord only: And now my greateſt Trouble was concerning the Unpardonableneſs of my Sins, eſpecially that particular Sin of Blaſphemy; yet would my Spirit calm betwixt Hands, and be at Eaſe for a While. I thought the Devil had a great Hand in my Tentations: For ſaid I, While I was walking after the Fleſh, there was nothing of this ſeen or heard; but ſince I have come to and engaged with Chriſt, and followed his Ways, is all this come upon me; 'tis not likely that this is in Wrath, or from God. I continued in the Extremity of this Condition but a few Days, never opening my Caſe to any, being baſhful: I was ſent for by my Relations upon

upon ſome emergent Occaſion that did fall out; I was glad of the Opportunity, becauſe by that Means I ſhould ſhun the Sacrament that was to be given about that Time; but, coming there, my Tentations and Horrours increas'd; I thought every Creature happy but myſelf; Meat, Drink and Company were a Burden unto me.

§ 4. That which did mainly trouble me was my particular Sin of Blaſphemy, which did in my Apprehenſion render my Condition helpleſs and hopeleſs. 2*dly*, The Evil and Terribleneſs of a natural Condition, and the exceeding great Difficulty of ſaving Converſion. 3*dly*, The Swelling and Raging of my Heart with Hatred and Enmity againſt God, *that Sin might become exceeding ſinful*, Rom. vii. 7. 4*thly*, This was a terrible Conſideration, and took away the Comfort of all Means, That all I did was ſinful, becauſe it did proceed from me; and therefore I was many Times dung back from Prayer by this, Why comeſt thou to him, who hates and lothes every Work of thy Hands? 5*thly*, Unſucceſsfulneſs of Means for a long Time, whereby I concluded my Caſe to be deſperate, and no Cure for it at all. 6*thly*, Theſe Words ſounded terribly in my Heart, and were violently beaten in upon me, *God will damn thee, he has decreed it, 'tis impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe.* 7*thly*, The Conſideration of the great Number that ſhould be damned, and the Paucity of ſuch as ſhould be ſaved. 8*thly*, My great Fruſtrating in reſpect of former Enjoyments, *Pſal.* cii. 10. *He hath raiſed me up, and caſt me down.* 9*thly*, Terrible Dreams and Night-viſions of Hell and Judgment. 10*thly*, Fearful Apprehenſions of God,

who

who was repreſented to me as a conſuming Fire, and an angry Judge. Upon all this, *laſtly*, Enſued a terrible Deſpair, propheſying that Things would never be better. Hell did not trouble me much, but God's Wrath, and Separation from him, did ly heavieſt on me; and this was the Evil that I did ſee and feel in Sin: The Devil's End in afflicting with a particular Sin was to cauſe me deſpair, and to take off my Thought of any other Conſideration.

§ 5. While I was thus hopeleſs and helpleſs, not knowing what to do; to aggravate all my Miſeries, I was to hear a dead lifeleſs Preacher: Ah, and muſt I, ſaid I, have this with all my Evils, to come under a dead Miniſtry? But I went with the reſt, thinking it indifferent whom I heard, ſeeing I ſaw it beyond the Power of Means to help me. The Text was, 1 *Tim.* i. 1. Paul *an Apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt.* I went betwixt Sermons to a ſecret Place, and there poured out my Soul to God in Prayer; but no Refreſhing. I came unto the Afternoon's Sermon again; but, behold the Lord's Goodneſs! from an unexpected Hand, and from ſo general a Text, and at ſuch an unexpected Time, the Lord did ſend a Calm, and did that which I thought was impoſſible, *viz.* clear me fully (when I was capable of nothing leſs, and after all my Conſiderations had been in vain) that I had not ſinned unpardonably, from theſe Words which he cited in his Sermon, *Howbeit God forgave me, becauſe I did it ignorantly and in Unbelief.* The Spirit ſaid, Whatever thy Sins have been, they have been done in Unbelief, or whilſt thou waſt an Unbeliever, when thou knew nothing of God,

tho'

tho' they were not done ignorantly; all thy Sins were committed in a Time when there was not ſo much as a common Work of the Spirit, producing a common temporary Faith. This was enough; God may make any Thing ſtrong to do his Work. The Devil and all his Storms were rebuked and calmed, and that ſuddenly, and ſo fully, that I was never thereafter aſſaulted with Temptations of ſinning againſt the Holy Ghoſt. My Heart was made holy, and I put on a full Reſolution to ſeek the Lord till I ſhould find him, and do all in my Power for this Effect: And now I had good Hopes, ſeeing my Sins were pardonable; and this Hope produced a cheerful Endeavour to ſeek the Lord, which I did, and was labouring to do Good unto others, and to ſpread the Knowledge of Chriſt, by which Means I daily grew in the Knowledge and Love of God. The Books I moſt read on were, *Shepherd*, *Fenner*, and *Practice of Piety*, and *Confeſſion of Faith*; God did bleſs all to me, tho' I was not to my own Apprehenſions converted, but waiting for ſome glorious Manifeſtation of Chriſt, which ſhould ſuddenly, and fully and ſenſibly change me; and, waiting for this, I continued in this Caſe for the Space of a Month.

SECT. III.

Other Things relating to my Converſion, and the Lord's Dealing with me, conſidered.

§ 1. I Look upon this as the Time of my Converſion, and that then the everla-

ſting Seed was ſown; that Heaven was begun, and Chriſt formed within me, upon theſe Conſiderations, 1*ſt*, Becauſe I found my Heart changed as to my Company; I hated the moſt ſtrict before, but now I immediately found I loved and delighted moſt in the moſt holy and ſtrict People; ſo that the Perſons whom before I hated upon the account of ſome Diſobligements, I now loved and followed: And this Love was univerſal, ſo as, when either I heard tell of a godly Man, or ſaw him, my Heart warmed; and the *Love of the Brethren* I look on as a Sign that I am *tranſlated from Death to Life*, 1 John iii. 14. 2*dly*, Becauſe I found a new Eſteem of, a great Delight in, and Love to, and Longing after all the Ordinances of Chriſt and his Commands; I ſaw a Glory in them, I reliſh'd them, every Thing that ſavoured of God was ſweet, 1 *Pet.* ii. 2. which I never found before. 3*dly*, Becauſe I found my Heart at that Inſtant mortified to the World, and the Eſteem of and Delight in it gone, 1 *John* ii. 15. 4*thly*, Becauſe my Soul did ſee, eſteem, love and delight in the Lord Jeſus above all, and preferred him not only to the World, but to the Saints, Duties and Ordinances; and made a perpetual, cordial and perſonal Covenant to live with him and ſerve him, *Pſal.* lxxiii. 25, 26. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. 5*thly*, I found a glorious, univerſal and abiding Change, wrought by the Lord himſelf, *from Sin and Satan to God*, and *from Darkneſs to Light*, 2 Cor. v. 17. *All Things* were then *new*. 6*thly*, I was carried with a great Zeal for the Lord againſt all Sin and Sinners; and did ſtrive to draw all Men to Chriſt, by inſtructing and exhorting them. *Prov.* x. 21.

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The Lips of the Righteous feed many; and, *Luke* xxii. 32. *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen* others. Then, *7thly*, I found a new Light diſcovering to me the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God, and making me from that Time forward to underſtand the Scriptures, the Exerciſe of Saints recorded in Scripture; and I delighted not only in the Hiſtory or Relation of the Scripture, but in the Prophecies, Promiſes, Doctrines and ſpiritual Part thereof, which I never reliſh'd before, *Prov.* ii. 10. and viii. 9. Then was Wiſdom and her Ways pleaſant, and became plain to me, which were before lock'd up and a Myſtery, *Mat.* xiii. 11. *8thly*, In reſpect of the Lord's After-dealing with me, and of his former Dealing; for he was preparing me before, and dinging me out of my falſe Reſts. And ever thereafter, altho' there have been Tentations and Shakings and Interruptions, yet hath that Spunk never died which was kindled, but hath been growing at laſt, more and more; ſome Good ever remained, and, in my ſoreſt Decays, the Impreſſions of God's Dealing at this Time remain'd, ſo as there was a Longing after the firſt Husband, which was the Means to reduce me out of a backſliding Condition: And therefore I look upon it as the *Well of Water ſpringing up to everlaſting Life*; and that, in that reſpect of the remaining Seed, I think I am *born of God*, 1 John iii. 9. Hypocrites rejoice but for a Seaſon.

§ 2. I have looked on the Lord's Dealings towards me, and what this Manifeſtation of himſelf in ſuch a Manner as I never had the like all my Life might ſpeak to me, and what might be the Ends thereof; and, after Enquiry, I found

them to be, *1ſt*, To draw the Soul to God by Faith and Love. He lets taſte his Wine, that it may be bought; and therefore is there a *Seeing of the Son* and a *Believing on him*, John vi. 40. *John* xx. 29. Oh love and come to this glorious One, and, having diſcovered him to be the *Lord of Glory*, *open the everlaſting Doors*, Pſal. xxiv. 7, 9. yea, and when this Love is dead, quicken it again, by remembring him. *2dly*, To ſtrengthen our Faith in his Love, and our Hope of Heaven; and therefore hath he given this Teſtimony of his Love, revealing to me that rare Sight hid from the World, to be a Pledge and Earneſt of Heaven; and upon this to build and ſtrengthen my Faith, both in drawing near to him, and expecting all Good from him. This Revelation of Jeſus, enlightning, comforting and ſanctifying, is to me the Earneſt of the Inheritance, and Seal of the Spirit, mentioned *Eph.* i. 13, 14. 2 *Cor.* i. 22. *Which is the Earneſt of our Inheritance.* *3dly*, To comfort me in my Choice, ſhewing that I have not caſten away all for Shadows, and what I am to expect in Heaven, of which already I have taſted, 1 *Cor.* ii. 12. *Eye hath not ſeen*, &c. *4thly*, To manifeſt and make known himſelf in his condeſcending Power and Glory, of which I might doubt if I had not ſeen with mine own Eyes. Why ſhould I doubt of this his Power, when I have myſelf ſeen ſuch a Miracle, the blind Eye opened, the dead Heart quickned, and the Heart wholly chang'd? *He that believeth hath the Witneſs in himſelf*, 1 *John* v. 10. Oh to be raiſed from Hell to Heaven!

§ 3.

§ 3. I have likewiſe been thinking what this Storm immediately enſuing upon this ſhould mean; and my being caſt down to Hell, and er lifting up to Heaven. 1*ſt*, To let me ſee the Evil of mine own Heart, and exceeding Sinfulneſs thereof, which in ſuch a Degree I never ſaw before; and by the Murmuring and Riſing of my Heart, and fierce Reſiſtance I made, I perceive that by Nature I am a bitter Enemy to God, and a Toad full of Poiſon and Venom: To humble me, and to acknowledge his Grace and Love the more, *Job* i. 11. 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31. 2*dly*, To be a Ground of Faith when in like Straits and Caſes again, and to have a Proof of his Power; the Lord in my Extremity, when there was no Appearance of Help, when there was nothing in me but Frowardneſs and Rebellion, when I cried, yet pitied me, conquering both my Sin and Miſery: And why ſhould I doubt him now again? He ever helped me when in Extremity, yea, when my Caſe was moſt deſperate, *Rom.* v. 4. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 37. 2 *Tim.* iv. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* i. 10. *Pſal.* lxiii. 7. 3*dly*, To acquaint me with the Lord's Ways of Converſion, and with his Terrors, that I might thereby be a better Guide unto others, and be made more ſerious, 2 *Cor.* i. 4. and v. 14. *Pſal.* xxxiv. 4, 5, 6, 11. 4*thly*, That God might by me ſhew a Pattern of all Long-ſuffering, who obtained Mercy being ſo wild, 1 *Tim.* i. 16. 5*thly*, To ſhew his Juſtice as he is the Governor of the World. I was very wicked, and by the Law deſerved ſevere Puniſhment; I trampled on God's Kindneſs and Goodneſs: And therefore did the righteous Lord make me find Sin bitter, and for this Cauſe delivered

me over to *Satan*; he took me in his own Hand and corrected me, not willing that I ſhould die and be condemned either with or for the World, 1 *Cor.* xi. 32. 2 *Sam.* xii. 13, 14. *6thly*, To hold out and repreſent (to others) the Lord's Goodneſs, Love and Condeſcendency, that by this Experience of his Love my Heart might be endeared to him, *Pſal.* cxvi. 1. *I will love the Lord becauſe he hath heard my Prayers.* Which Love of his was kyth'd in delivering me from ſo great Depths ſo unexpectedly and by himſelf, and ſo fully and clearly after all Means had been uſed in vain; and to me who was ſo ignorant and wild, and by my Unbelief and Murmuring more wild, yet he came over all, and *freed me from my Fears*, Iſa. lvii. 16, 17, 18. *7thly*, To ding out the Bottom of that Tentation, and to pluck it out by the Roots, whereby I was made to believe that I had ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; which the Lord did now ſo fully and clearly, that I never after was troubled with it: And this was all *Satan* gained by this Encounter. 8*thly*, I think it was a Mean to make me live by Faith, and to ſpean me from Senſe, 1 *Pet.* i. 24, 25. ſeeing by Experience I found that all theſe ſenſible Glories are but Graſs that withers, and ſo not to be leaned on; but the Lord's Word endureth for ay.

§ 4. I will conclude with remarking ſome Inſtructions and Leſſons I learned from theſe Providences. 1*ſt*, 'Tis more ſure to live by Faith than by Senſe; the Life of Senſe is a Life of Uncertainties, expoſed to Aſſaults, 2 *Cor.* v. 7. 1 *Pet.* i. 24. 2*dly*, There is ordinarily in the Day of Eſpouſals ſomething extraordinary of God's

God's Love and Glory manifeſted; the fatted Calf is killed when firſt the Prodigal is brought home, *Luke* xv. 22, 23. No leſs can aſſure them of their Father's Love, nor take away their Wildneſs, and make them comply with their new Life: Hence, *Hoſ.* ii. 15. *I will make thee ſing as in the Days when I brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt. *3dly*, The Soul in Converſion cloſeth chiefly with the Perſon of Chriſt, *Jer.* iv. 1. *If thou wilt return, return to me*; and the not doing heroof is complained of, *Hoſ.* vii. 16. *They return, but not to the moſt High.* *4thly*, Grace makes a great, wonderful and univerſal Change, changing the outward Life and inward Frame, 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *All Things are new*; new Prayers, new Love, new Company, new Opinions and new Principles: A Man is much different from what he was, not only while a profane Man, but even while a civil or moral Man under ſome common Work. *5thly*, One main Way by which a gracious Frame is kythed is in Love to the Saints, and joining with them. *Acts* ix. 26. Converted *Paul* eſſayeth to join himſelf with the Diſciples. *6thly*, There may be much Corruption to be mortified in a Soul newly brought in to God, and under great Flaſhes: For notwithſtanding of all this Diligence, Delight in Duties and Joy, I was full of Ignorance, Unbelief; ſelfiſh, proud, conceited and light. Grace is indeed but ſmall when it begins, *Mat.* xviii. 3. *Mark* iv. 31. unknown to themſelves; little Faith, Patience and rooted Love, tho' ſome Flaſhes there may be. *7thly*, The Lord draws ſweetly and gently; and, in the Work of Converſion, much of his Love, of his Power and of his

his Glory is outed and expreſſed in that Act and Work, *John* x. 16. and vi. 44, 45. *Hoſ.* xi. 3, 4. The Work of Converſion hath much of God engraven on it. 8*thly*, Greateſt Flowings have greateſt Ebbings, *Pſal.* cii. 10. *Thou haſt lift me up, and caſt me down. Mat.* iii. 17. with *Mat.* iv. 1. 2 *Cor.* xii. 4, 7. 9*thly*, Sudden and extraordinary Flaſhes of Joy and ſpiritual Enlargements are more dangerous, and not ſo firm, as that which is leſs ſenſible and attained by Degrees and Pains. The bad Grounds received the Word with Joy, and ſprang up ſuddenly; but the good Ground brings forth Fruit with Patience, *Luke* viii. 15. and *Mat.* xiii. 20. 10*thly*, Whatever Good comes ſuddenly (let it be ſincere, or unſound and ſo but an appearing Good) will not continue in that Height, but theſe Tides and Inundations will come to their ordinary Chanel again, Some Seeds and Impreſſions and Dippings may remain, but *all Fleſh is Graſs*, 1 Pet. i. 24. *We walk by Faith, and not by Sight*, 2 Cor. v. 7. I had never an extraordinary Enlargement, either of Joy, Strength or Sanctification, but the Waters dried up. There are no ſudden Steps in Grace; *I will not drive them out all at once*, Exod. xxiii. 29. *They ſhall go from Strength to Strength*, Pſal. lxxxiv. 7. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like Leaven*, that leavens all inſenſibly, *Mat.* xiii. 33. Be content to get Matters wrought by Degrees, Strength, Labour and Pains; and murmur not at the Tediouſneſs thereof, neither expect great Things ſuddenly; or, if ye meet with ſome ſuch Thing, look not for the Continuance thereof, till by Degrees ye come up to it. 11*thly*, Little Difference

rence appearing from a ſudden Rapture of Joy betwixt what is in Saints and Hypocrites, it were Wiſdom, when we examine our Eſtate, to examine rather by the whole Courſe of the Life, than by one particular Work. Continued Kindneſs to the Lord ſpeaks more than any particular Enjoyment, tho' never ſo extraordinary, *Pſal.* xxiii. 6. and xxxvii. 37. *Mark the perfect Man's* End; ſee what all ends in. Conclude not peremptorily from Beginnings of any, either as to Good or Evil; I could build little on this, if I did not ſee it backed with an After-tract of Kindneſs; or elſe might have thought it the Taſting of the Powers of the World to come. The great viſible Difference of the good Ground from the ſtony Ground, was a Fruit brought forth to Perfection: Fooliſh Virgins Lamps will go out at laſt, *Mat.* xxv. 12*thly*, The more Pains and the longer Continuance the Work of Preparation will be of, the deeper; the more ſolid and glorious the Superſtructure will be, *Mat.* xiii. 21. *It wanted Deepneſs of Earth.* 13*thly*, Unbelief and Doubting of Intereſt is *Satan's* firſt Tentation to Apoſtaſy, *Luke* iv. 3. *Heb.* iii. 12. *Jer.* ii. 28. *Lam.* i. 9. for I found, when Unbelief came, it made a Breach for all other Evils. 14*thly*, Legal Terrors in themſelves tend to Evil, tho' God accidentally drives Good in them; and therefore not to be ſimply deſired or cheriſhed, 1 *John* iv. 18. *Gal.* iv. 24, 30. *Rom.* vii. 9. yet the Lord brings *Meat out of the Eater.* 15*thly*, One main Evil young Converts are ſubject unto, is Miſtakes (as we may ſee by Scripture-examples and our Experiences) eſpecially anent the Nature of Sanctification and God's Love, which

which, until cleared, is Matter of ſad Exerciſe. I had many Miſtakes, which were as Breaches leaving me open continually, and for many Years, to the Aſſaults of the Enemy; of which I will ſpeak afterwards. 16*thly*, Not one remarkable Circumſtance of Providence wherewith his People are tryſted, whether Sweet or Sour, Good or Evil, but in the End proves there was Mercy in it, *Pſal.* xxv. 10. *All his Ways are Mercy and Truth to them that fear him*; Which, tho' for a while, thro' our not regarding it, or Unbelief miſconſtructing all, appears not, yet it is ſo, and God uſually diſcovers it after many Days: For, after a long while reflecting on Times paſt, I ſaw in them ſo much of God, that I never before conſidered, that I found Matter of bleſſing God for all, *Rom.* viii. 28. *All Things work for Good*; even their Sins and Deſertions. 17*thly*, God himſelf is more eminently ſeen, in the Mercies of his People, than Inſtruments; and therefore ordinarily none doth Good but himſelf, and that not in the Way, Thing, Manner and Time they propoſe unto themſelves, but as he propoſes: *There was no ſtrange god with him*, Deut. xxxii. 12. *O People ſaved by the Lord*, Deut. xxxiii. 29. Pſal. lxviii. 35. and xviii. 31, 32. 18*thly*, 'Tis poſſible Folks may meet with more ſharp Convictions after Converſion than before, eſpecially if they have not been well hammered with the Law, *Heb.* x. 32. *After enlightned, endured a great Fight of Afflictions*: Which are not to be confined to outward, but inward likewiſe; *Heman* may ſtill *ſuffer Terrors*, Pſal. lxxxviii. throughout. And I queſtion if *Job* ever found ſuch Work as afterwards. I grant they

they *have not received the Spirit of Bondage* (which is one's conſtant Frame) hence *Hannah* is called *a Woman of a ſorrowful Spirit*. Before Converſion (except when Madneſs made me rejoice) Death and Judgment were continually terrible unto me, and *thro' Fear of Death* was *kept all my Lifetime in Bondage*, Heb. ii. 15. but now it is but in Fits. A Fearer of God may *ſit in Darkneſs, and have no Light*, Iſa. l. 10. But tho' they create Sorrow and Diſcouragements unto themſelves, and love to ſwim in theſe black Streams, yet have not they received this Spirit of Bondage, but the Spirit of Adoption, and they may come to God as a Father: This is their Allowance, and the new Nature and Seed of Grace tend to this; yet preternaturally, and by Accident thro' Miſtakes and Corruptions, it is hindered that it vents not itſelf in theſe filial Motions, and will in End do it; yet, tryſted with Diſpenſations of Providence, they may be troubled with this Spirit of Bondage: Howſoever they take it and harbour it, yet they received it not of God; *Perfect Love caſteth out Fear*, 1 John iv. 18. it is not their Allowance.

CHAP. IV.

Relating ſome Things touching a Decay that happened immediately thereafter.

I Fell in a ſad Decay both of Light and Life and Conſolation; the Steps of it were.

§ 1. *Step* 1. Was Unbelief and doubting of my Intereſt in God, and of his Love, thro' the Miſtakes of the Nature of Sanctification, and by a wrong Conſtruction of Providences, and Ignorance

rance of the Covenant of Grace; ſo as I was in *Job*'s Condition; tho' I had prayed, and God had anſwered me, yet could I not believe it; I could not believe I was ſo happy as to be converted: And, having ſuch ſad Thoughts of myſelf, I had a bad Conſtruction of God and all his Ways to me, inaſmuch as I thought God did in Wrath take away my Terrors. Ah! ſaid I, Time was when the Lord was taking Pains with me, and did lay Siege with the Law againſt my Soul, at which Time I delighted in Duties; he put me in his Fire and Furnace, but now will he take no more Care of me; now hath he raiſed his Siege, and given me over: Oh miſerable Man that I am! I am left now to the judicial Plague of an hard Heart, which hath ſeized upon me; I am to pine out the reſt of my Days in Vanity, Sin and Trouble. And when my Heart was in any Frame, this, ſaid I, is but to make me ſecure that I may not fear; 'tis but a Deluſion: Which had theſe ſad Effects upon my Soul; *1ſt*, Strange and hard Thoughts of God as of an Enemy, *Luke* xix. 21. *Gen.* iii. 5. as One that envied our Good. *2dly*, I judged all that God ſaid of his Love in his Word to be but Wind at beſt, or Compliments or Snares to intrap; and ſo made him a Liar, 1 *John* v. 10. and by this Means was made incapable to be taken with Chriſt's Allurements in the Goſpel. *3dly*, Hence I could neither love nor believe him, nor by any Means be drawn to him, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 7. *Charity believeth all Things*: For how could I love him in whom I believed I had no other Intereſt than that of a cruel Judge ready to condemn, and watching for Evil againſt me, and that, when his

Words

Words were ſmoother than Oil? Pſal. lv. 21. Zech. xi. 8. 4*thly*, I had no Will to keep Communion with him, was wearied of him. When the *Iſraelites* ſaid, *We have no* Portion or *Inheritance in the Son of* Jeſſe, the next was, *Every Man to his Tents*, and did quit him. *Jer.* iii. 19. *Thou ſhalt call me, My Father, and ſhalt not depart from me.* 5*thly*, I was heartleſs or ſlight in Duties, whereby he was honoured, and Communion with him entertained; wanting Love and Hope, *Jer.* xviii. 12. *Lam.* i. 9. *Luke* xix. 21. Thro' Unbelief my Hands were weakned, and I departed from the living God. 6*thly*, Finding no Satisfaction in God, which I could not do whilſt theſe Principles remained; I behoved to have it elſewhere in the Creature. *Jer.* ii. 12. *Forſaking of God the Fountain of living Waters*, and *hewing to ourſelves broken Ciſterns*, are joined. 7*thly*, Sermons did me no Good, becauſe not heard with Faith, *Heb.* iv. 2. whereas, if I had believed and truſted in God, I ſhould be ſtrengthned with the Joy of his Salvation, *Neh.* viii. 10. *Prov.* xvii. 22. 2 *Cor.* ii. 7.

§ 2. *Step* 2. Notwithſtanding of all this, I had Hopes, that tho' as yet the Lord had not converted me, yet I might be converted, and therefore did not deſpair of it. Some ſecret Thoughts in Duties would drop in perſwading me to hope, and ſome Reliſh in Duties: As likewiſe, ſince I was perſwaded by a ſtrong Hand my Sins were pardonable, and that the Lord poſſibly might pardon; this made me continue in the Means. *Satan* therefore ſought to beat me from this, or at leaſt to make me remiſs in them; and, knowing that palpable Vanities would not do

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(for I had been burnt with that Candle already) therefore would compaſs this by making me cloſe with an Appearance of Good, which he did thus: I ſtudied Stenography or Short-writing, in the Study of which, aiming at Perfection in it, I was exceſſive, and ſo taken up altogether from any other Thing, that I could ſcarce get the Form of Duties gone about two Times a Day. In End I reſolved to give Way, cheated with this, that, the ſooner I acquired Knowledge herein, I ſhould the ſooner have Leiſure to wait on God; but however, this Spirit of Whoredom cauſed me to err, and took away my Heart. This was the ſecond Mean of my Decay.

§ 3. *Step* 3. When I was called home, thro' want of godly Company, and dead formal Society among which I lived, I was brought a further Length of Decay, even to omit Duties almoſt altogether; contenting myſelf ordinarily with Bed-prayers, and ſlight Reading of Scripture and godly Books. Several Things had Influence on this; the want of a convenient Room, a prevailing Spirit of Sloth that would not break thro' Difficulties, ſome falſe Hopes that all would be well: Sometimes my Heart would ſecretly deſpair, and propheſy Things would never be better, and 'tis in vain to pray; thro' theſe Things it came to paſs that my Heart turned altogether out of Tune, and heeded not my Work at all: Now had Preachings and Sermons no Reliſh at all; then did I ſee that fulfilled, *He that followeth vain Perſons ſhall become poor*, Prov. xxviii. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 33. *Evil Company corrupteth good Manners.*

§ 4. *Step* 4. Then, thro' want of the Fear of

of God, and Unwatchfulneſs, did I become vain and light in my Converſation; I followed Lies and Vanities; I carded, complied with ſinful Cuſtoms, made no Conſcience of what Company I came into, *inventing to myſelf Inſtruments of Muſick*, and ſeeking Contentment from the Creature. When Company was away, my Heart turned melancholly, but did not turn to God. I would pray when tryſted with any Diſappointments; but ſtill, thro' Interruption, loſt more Ground than I gained, ſo as I went daily down the Stream, and grew exceeding hard-hearted: Spiritual Duties were a Wearineſs and a Burden; and thus was not only diſcouraged and remiſs in Duties, ſlighting them altogether, but grew very untender and carnal in my Converſion.

§ 5. Whence a fifth *Step*, which was, going to ſome Relations to paſs a Viſit, where there were many Profeſſors and much Profeſſion; but there I got a dead Stroke, ſo as it is a Wonder how ever I recovered. In a Word, I turned deſperate, and ſaid, *There is no Hope; I have loved Idols, and after them I will go*, Jer. ii. 25. The Grounds of this Deſpair were, 1*ſt*, A great and long Account of Sins that had run up upon me, which I thought would never be pardoned, *Jer.* ii. 28. 2*dly*, The terrible hard Frame of my Heart, and great Deadneſs I was in, ſo that I thought I would never recover again, *John* xi. 39. *Ezek.* xxxvii. 4. *Can theſe Bones live?* Gen. xviii. 11, 12. 3*dly*, Some fruitleſs vain Attempts I made to recover myſelf; my Strength waſted in vain: And hence I ſaid, *This Evil is of the Lord*, and remedileſs; *What ſhould I wait on him any more?* 2 Kings vi. 33. 4*thly*, The Complaints,

Doubts

Doubts and Diſcouragements of others, and their unſuitable walking up to their Principles, who yet were eminent for Godlineſs in the Eſtimation of others; they went with bowed down Backs, and raiſed an ill Report to me of the Lord and his Ways: And therefore were my Hands weakned by theſe Spies, *Num.* xiii. 30. *5thly*, Their unloving Carriage towards me, and keeping at a Diſtance, and taunting me. At another Time, ſeeking to join in with them, and to bear the Burden of a good Diſcourſe leſt it ſhould die, I was put off with a Taunt. 'Tis true, my Converſation at that Time was not Goſpel-like; yet they had Beams in their own Eyes, and they ſhould have dealt in greater Meekneſs with me, and kythed Love by a friendly Reprehenſion. This turned me averſe to them, and to their Way, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 21. They *puſh'd with Horn and Side*, and this produced *Scattering*. *6thly*, I was but too much countenanced by others, and humoured and complied with; for I was given to fooliſh Jeſting, and they took but too much Pleaſure in this, and never once gave me a friendly Warning or Reproof, altho' my Ways were diſpleaſing to them: *The Soul that lacketh Inſtruction ſhall die.* 7thly, *Satan* was beating in ſtrange Tentations on my Soul, ſometimes telling me I was judicially hardned ſince I could not mourn for my Sins, and that it was ever ſo ſince my Terrors were removed: And then that Place, *Iſa.* vi. 10. came to my Mind; *Make the Heart of this People fat.* Sometimes thinking my Time was paſt, and my Day gone, and that Chriſt had given his laſt Knock, and that the Door was ſhut. That Place,

Place, *Prov.* i. 26. troubled me, *Becauſe I called and ye would not hear, therefore ſhall ye call and I will not hear*; therefore 'tis in vain now to cry or pray: Sometimes *Satan* ſaid I had ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, citing *Heb.* vi. 4. For it is true (was it ſuggeſted to me) thy Blaſphemies were not that Sin, becauſe thou didſt that in Unbelief, and not enlightned; but now thou haſt been *enlightned*, and *taſted of the Powers of the World to come*, and haſt *fallen away*, and laid a new Foundation from thy dead Works for Repentance, and therefore 'tis impoſſible to be renewed again; and this is the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. This raiſed not that Terror in me which Tentations of this Kind were wont to do formerly; only made me heartleſs, and diſcouraged me: And then would *Satan* add, Doſt thou not mark how unmoved thou art with this heavy Meſſage, which would cauſe any other to tremble but thyſelf? And why art thou not ſhaken? Becauſe the Lord has hardned thee like *Pharaoh*, that thou canſt not hearken; the Sentence is paſt, and the Stone is laid upon thy Grave; and now all thy Life is gone, thou art *twice dead, and pluckt up by the Roots*. With theſe Thoughts I was dung from Duties and their cheerful Exerciſe; with Pleaſures, Company, and Want of inward and outward Exerciſe, I was kept in my Security and ſtrong Bonds.

§ 6. My Sins were, *1ſt*, Slighting and omitting of Duties publick and private. *2dly*, Vain and light Converſation like the World; the Shew of my Countenance witneſſed againſt me. *3dly*, Idle Jeſting, *Eph.* v. 4. *4thly*, Breaking of the Sabbath with Idleneſs and mine own Words.

5thly, Following of the Luſts of the Fleſh and divers Vanities. *6thly*, Senſuality. *7thly*, Doing no Good, neither glorifying God, nor edifying others, nor profiting myſelf. *8thly*, Haunting vain Company, and not reproving them. *9thly*, Sinful Cuſtoms and Recreations, tho' debated by ſome; ſuch as Healthing, and playing at Cards.

§ 7. Notwithſtanding of this, the Lord upheld me by his Right-hand, and kept in the dying Spunk, that all theſe Waters could not quite extinguiſh it; I fell not totally away, nor was I utterly forſaken of God, *Jer.* v. 5. For theſe Things remained; *1ſt*, I was put out to pray, meditate and read now and then; I was not dung altogether from Duties; I did not ſhew myſelf to have no Knowledge at all, in not calling on God, *Pſal.* xiv. 4. *2dly*, There remained a ſecret and quiet Hope Things would be well, and a Looking up to him; tho' *caſt down, yet not in Deſpair*, 2 Cor. iv. 8. *3dly*, Love and Affection to and Eſtimation of the People of God, and Delight in them, ſtill remained, ſo as even then I loved them above others. *4thly*, Diſſatisfiedneſs with my preſent Condition, groning under and mourning when I remembred the Days of old; this Courſe was not pleaſant, I was like a Bone out of Joint, theſe Matters were not my Element. *5thly*, Some Love to my firſt Huſband remained, and a preferring of the firſt Courſe and Life even in its worſt before this; even as one prefers the Day to the Night: And often would I ſay that Word, with *Job*, *O that it were with me as in Months paſt, when the Candle of the Lord ſhined upon my Head!* Job

xxix.

xxix. 2, 3, 4. *6thly*, I knew that it was ill with me; tho' I ſlept, yet I was not ſo dead as to be without Senſe or Knowledge altogether.

§ 8. God's Ends in this, for any Thing I can learn, were only to give further Proof of his Love, in renewing his Kindneſs, in ſparing me whilſt in this Condition, in preſerving me from turning Apoſtate, and in his Time graciouſly reviving me again with much Pains and long Labour. *2dly*, To keep me watchful in Time coming, leſt a worſe Thing befal me. *3dly*, And to let me find the Power of Sin, and of my original Corruption, more fully, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31. *4thly*, To keep me humble for ever after it, that I may not *open the Mouth*, Ezek. xvi. 63.

§ 9. Theſe Things had Influence on my Decay mainly; *1ſt*, Want of outward and inward Afflictions: I had *no Changes, therefore feared not God*, Pſal. lv. 19. The Spurs were out of my Side, Terrors were away, which drave me to Duty. *2dly*, In reſpect of the Decay of that inward Sweetneſs which accompanied Duty formerly; God, having brought me out of *Egypt* into the Wilderneſs, had withdrawn that: And, wanting theſe By-fleeces, I fell in my Walk; *For this* Moſes, *we know not what is become of him*, Exod. xxxii. 1. *3dly*, Thro' Proceſs of Time the Spirits wearied, and the Impreſſions of Things did wear away; and, being wearied, I deſired Sleep: *They rejoiced in his Light for a Seaſon*, John v. 35. and, as the *Galatians*, did run well at the Break. *4thly*, Many Tentations from within and from without, which the Lord kept up before. Now the Lord let out my original Corruption, and I found nothing but a deep hatred

hard Heart from within, and Diſcouragement from without, and this made the Way more hard. 5*thly*, The powerful Means were removed; the good Company and powerful Sermons were gone which did feed me. 6*thly*, Godleſs Company that had no Grace, with which I was tryſted, that did eat out all Religion out of me. 7*thly*, The formal, carnal and liſeleſs Converſation of ſome (much cried up) Profeſſors made me even deſpair as it were. 8*thly*, Too eagerly following of lawful Comforts, and Employments and Studies. 9*thly*, Growing remiſs in the Exerciſe of Duties, eſpecially of private Prayer and Meditation. 10*thly*, Not looking to Ills in the Beginning, but letting them run on; not heeding Things, or conſidering my Ways, but ſleeping: And therefore became my Garden overſpread with Thorns. 11*thly*, Want of Knowledge and Principles; whereby I became over credulous, and believed every Thing that was ſuggeſted. 12*thly*, Unbelief and Diſcouragements; whereby I concluded all loſt and deſperate, and God a hard Maſter, and that I was not yet converted: An *evil Heart of Unbelief in departing from God*, Heb. iii. 12. 13*thly*, Taken up with leſſer Matters, and not exerciſed with weighty Truths and Duties; taken up with Trials of Grace, and not exerciſed with comm n Principles. 14*thly*, Living by Senſe, and not by Faith.

§ 10. I obſerve theſe Things from this Decay of mine; 1*ſt*, 'Tis ordinary, and an Evil to be watched againſt, to fall away from that Meaſure Saints receive at their firſt Converſion, *Rev.* ii. 4. 5. *Thou haſt fallen from thy firſt Love.* Temptations come, and God withdraws his Strength and

and Comfort; and in Proceſs of Time the Spirits weary, and this breeds Fainting. 2*dly*, Saints fall not away totally; ſomething ſtill remaineth, 1 *John* iii. 9. *His Seed remaineth in him.* Cant. v. 2. *My Heart waketh.* 3*dly*, Whatever the Decay of Saints be, yet the Lord ordinarily recovers them out of it again; *Tho' they fall, they ſhall ariſe*, Mic. vii. 8. The ſlumbring Virgins were at laſt awakned, *Mat.* xxv 5, 7. 4*thly*, Unbelief, eſpecially in paſſing hard Sentences on our own Eſtate, and doubting of our Sonſhip, the firſt and greateſt Cauſe of Apoſtaſy, *Heb.* iii. 12. therefore *Satan* tempted Chriſt with this firſt; *If thou be the Son of God.* Jer. ii. 25. *There is no Hope; we have loved Idols.* 5*thly*, A Chriſtian thrives as he keeps up Correſpondence with God in private Duties, eſpecially ſecret Prayer, *Mat.* xxvi. 41. *Pray, leſt ye enter into Temptation.* Exod. xvii. 11. 6*thly*, A Backſlider ordinarily goeth a great Length ere he recover, *Jer.* ii. 5. *They have deeply revolted, they have gone far from me.* 7*thly*, Saints are drawn from God by Appearances of Good, by ſeeming Temptations; they are beguiled in the Uſe of lawful Comforts. We ſhould watch much againſt this; *A Tree to be deſired to make one wiſe.* 8*thly*, Backſliding and ſpiritual Apoſtaſy comes by Degrees; he falls not all at once. *Mat.* xxv. The Virgins firſt ſlumbered, then ſlept; hence 'tis called *Backſliding*: A Man quietly ſlides from God. 9*thly*, No Means can reclaim a backſliding Soul, nor make the ebbing Soul flow, till the Lord's Hour come: 'Tis a Stroke of Omnipotence that makes the Fever turn; no Phyſician can ſtop the Iſſue, Hoſ. xiv. 4.

'Tis God that healeth Backſlidings. 10*thly*, A Man may contract in a Way of Backſliding ſuch Evils very quickly, that he will not for a long Time get quite rid off: Sins and Decays are very hard to cure. 11*thly*, Perſons are ordinarily very ſecure, and quiet and ſleeping in a decaying Condition; they ſleep while the Son of Man is betrayed to Sinners. 12*thly*, Senſe and Affections, without Knowledge, do expoſe a Soul to many Evils, and make their Caſe very uncertain and unſtable: *Children* in Underſtanding, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 20. are *toſſed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine.* Eph. iv. 14. 13*thly*, A fiery Temptation may be ſuſpended and calmed; but, until it be cured by the Word, it will return again. All the Time of this Decay, my Temptation of ſinning the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt did never recur, in reſpect it was once cured by the Word. 14*thly*, Ill Company, and Peace in the World, are ill Attendants of a Backſlider, *Prov.* i. 32. *The Proſperity of Fools deſtroys them.* Oh 'tis ſad when carnal Company and a Soul departing from God tryſt together; *Wo to him that is alone*, Eccl. iv. 10. 15*thly*, A carnal Generation of Profeſſors is greatly abominable to the Lord, and great Plagues in the Earth, eſpecially to young Beginners: Oh for the Garments of Praiſe! They raiſe an evil Report; and ordinarily Carnality and Diſcouragement go together.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.
Of my Recovery.

SECT. I.
Of the firſt ſeveral Steps, and Manner thereof.

THE Lord did not raiſe me all at once out of my backſlidden Condition, nor without Interruption (as might be thought) but very leiſurely, and thro' many Ups and Downs. The Seed was ſown, and it grew; and I ate and drank, and knew not how: The Spring was ſmall in the Beginning, ſcarce diſcernible. I looked indeed for the Kingdom of Heaven to come with Obſervation, but it came not ſo; and as it was ſown with little Din and Noiſe, ſo did it grow up quietly, and had many Interruptions and Winters, going backward and forward; like the filling Sea, ſome Wave gained Ground, and ſome ſucceeding loſt and abated, but a new Overflowing regained all again. There would come a Wave of the Spirit that would overflow largely, but after that a little Ebb; and then, when I little expected, there would come a Wave that would ſet me as far forward as ever again; and then a little Decay, and then a Recovery, ſo as for a long Time I was toſt up and down like a Locuſt; wearied of myſelf, and of my Life, and Righteouſneſs, and Enlargements of Heart, and of all theſe Glories. I was after Humiliation of Heart, by a ſtrong yet quiet Hand, at the Command of God, with little Din made to believe and reſt on Chriſt, ſo as I had never done the ſame before;

and in Proceſs of Time to become aſſured, and ſo come to ſee myſelf in a good Eſtate, and to have come off my Way, and the Lord to have almoſt perfected his Work ere I had thought he had well begun. Nor all this Time did I know what the Lord was doing until of late; but thinking I was minting to enter in at the ſtrait Gate, and *ever learning and never able to attain to the Knowledge of the Truth.* And now I ſee that all this Time the Lord carried me as an Eagle doth her young ones, *Deut.* xxxii. 10, 11, 12. And when the Lord was leaving, and his Work going back in mine Eyes, yet was it going forward. The Way and Steps of this my Recovery were,

§ 1. *Step* 1ſt. After I had long departed from God, and ſo gone far away, the Lord made me unſatisfied with and weary of my preſent Condition; and even in this laughing Madneſs was my Heart ſorrowful: And when in Midſt of my Jollity, if at any Time I would think on my former Eſtate, I would ſay, Oh what a ſad Condition am I in now! Oh the Days of old! *Oh that it were with me as in Months paſt!* Oh that I were under Chriſt's Terrors again! His Glooms and Boaſts were better than this at beſt, *Hoſ.* ii. 7. *better when with the firſt Husband.* I remembred whence I had fallen, and this dung out the Bottom of my carnal Contentments.

§ 2. *Step* 2d. I had Thoughts to return to my firſt Husband, but was beaten from this with the Apprehenſions that it was not Time; and hence it became a great Caſe to me, Whether the Lord may aſſault a Soul with a Spirit of Conviction, and leave it, and come again? *Rutherfurd*

furd had a terrible Word, which haunted me like a Ghoſt, *viz. A Man is ſaved in the Nick of Converſion, er elſe eternally loſt.* Sometimes I thought I was judicially hardned, and my Time gone; but the Lord did take the Thorn away, and made me hope, by caſting a Book in my Hand which did write of Compunction; and he ſtates the Caſe, *viz. Whether a Man once under Convictions, and theſe dying without Fruit, can be again converted?* He determined it affirmatively, with ſuch Reaſons as then convinced me, ſo as I reſolved to ſet up Shop again, and try it, *Ezra* x. 2, 3. tho' I found therein a great Difficulty.

§ 3. *Step* 3d. Was the ſetting about the Means, with Prayer, Reading and Meditation. I reſted not in bare fruitleſs Wiſhings and Hopes, but I was helped to ſet myſelf to ſeek the Lord, and ſet up Shop again; tho' with ſome Difficulty, the Irons were ruſted. I continued praying Morning and Evening for ſome Time, and meditating, and preparing my Heart, notwithſtanding all my Diſcouragements and Indiſpoſitions and little Succeſs; for my Heart continued hard, dead and blind, and Converſation carnal, and Duties were a Burden to me.

§ 4. *Step* 4th. Having for ſome twenty Days prayed, mourned and complained, and not finding any Life, but my Deadneſs increaſing, and hearing no Word of Chriſt, I begun to have Suſpicions that Sentence was indeed paſt againſt me, and that I was ſealed under the Plague of an hard Heart, and that Chriſt had given over; and was tempted to caſt aſide Duties as vain: And then I ſaid, Oh poor Soul, thou wilt never get

ſo

ſo much as a tender Heart again, nor ſo much as once to pour out this thy Soul to God ere thou die. While I was thus exerciſed, the Lord was pleaſed to let me again taſte ſome of the Sweetneſs of Duties; for one Time I went in the Multitude of my Thoughts to the Lord in Prayer, and it pleaſed the Spirit to blow, and to open my Heart, ſo as I prayed with Abundance of Tears and great Liberty, and I found much Sweetneſs in the Work: Now, altho' I was not ſatisfied with this, yet I was comforted, in that it was a Proof to me that the Lord had not quite forſaken me, and that after this there would come better.

§ 5. *Step* 5th. I begun then to fall more cloſly to Work, and to put other Sails on, and more Irons in the Fire; for then did I write Diaries, make Vows and Covenants, and to fall to the Work of Self-examination, and to write ſome infant Notions of practical Divinity, and my Meditations on ſeveral Texts, which did me Good, and at firſt helped me forward, and ſuited me well.

§ 6. *Step* 6th. The Lord by Duties wearied me with them, and mortified me to my Self-righteouſneſs, and did with Labour bring down my Heart. 1*ſt*, He diſcovered unto me, and let me feel the Evil and Power of my Heart: Then did I grone under the Burden of a dead, blind and carnal Heart, and the Body of Death was my great Exerciſe, and Heart-ills, eſpecially Hardneſs of Heart: And thus more ſenſibly than ever I was wearied and burdened with my Heart, tho' not in Horrour. 2*dly*, The Lord let me ſee the Sinfulneſs of all my Duties and beſt Actions; the Formality, Lifeleſneſs, and corrupt Princi-

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ples whence they proceeded, and my great Shortcomings, ſo as I knew theſe were not my Saviours, and turned mine Eyes from them. 3*dly*, I was wearied and loadned with myſelf, my Sins and Duties, trailed thro' various Diſpenſations, and burdened with feckleſs Labour: I ſaw I could not put my Heart in a Frame, nor keep my Heart in a Frame when it was in it, but ſtill did break my Reſolutions. My Duties they yielded neither Peace nor Satisfaction, nor did they mortify Sin; for I was but rowing againſt the Stream, and after a long Time worſe in my own Conceit than before: I was dying ſometimes, and living again; when like to die, the Lord would look upon me, and put it in my Heart to ſeek him, and would ſend down Influences, and enlarge my Soul with Love and Deſires after himſelf, and Sorrow for Sin, and new Reſolutions; and this would quicken me for a While, and make me hope and ſeek the Lord. And then again the Lord would depart, and my Soul would be overclouded, and I would turn unwatchful, and fall to my ordinary Sins, and depart from the Lord, and ſin in Words: And with this I was vexed, becauſe my Reſolutions were broken; and I was diſcouraged, and deſpaired ever to come up; and was weakned, thinking, how ſhall I look the Lord in the Face? What Security can I now give him for my Behaviour? Until at laſt that no Frame or Duty could give me Comfort at all. And, when my Heart was enlarged, I ſaid, I have enough of Deluſions, let me alone. Yet, whilſt thus diſcouraged, not knowing what to do, and unable to think of what might do me Good, God would ſhine in upon my Soul; and among a hundred

Viſits

clearly and rationally the Lord's Equity, and abſolute Dominion he hath over all, to do with them as he pleaſeth; and that he did nothing with me but what was fitting, *Lam.* i. 18. *Dan.* ix. 7. *Jer.* xii. 1. The Murmurings and Swellings of my Heart were quieted and calmed; I was no more like the raging Sea, but in a calm and quiet Frame, like one newly cool'd out of a raging Fever, *Lam.* iii. 28. *Lev.* x. 3. *Pſal.* xxxix. 9. I diſputed now no more againſt God or his Proceedings. 2*do*, My Heart, even my Affections, were made to comply with my preſent Diſpenſations; I did willingly bear the Yoke, *Mic.* vii. 9. *Lam.* iii. 28. So that I was ſatisfied with whatever came to paſs; *It is the Lord*, &c. 3*tio*, I did put myſelf in his Will, to do to me as it ſeemed Good; ſo as, if he put me in Hell, I ſhould not murmur nor complain of Injuſtice, 2 *Sam.* xv. 26. This was wrought in a low Meaſure, and did proceed more from the Senſe of God's Sovereignty than of his Juſtice, and was rather negative in not murmuring, than poſitive in a hearty Compliance with Evils. And thus was the Frame and Work of Humiliation wrought in me; and I continued herein for a Month, ſuffering every Thing, and doing what the Lord required.

§ 9. *Step* 9th. After I was in this low Meaſure humbled, I proceeded another Step, even to reſign myſelf to the Lord, It was occaſioned by reading a Sermon of Mr. *Andrew Gray's*, on theſe Words, *My Son, give me thy Heart.* I was made to comply with that Command, ſo as, tho' I could not ſay I was quite conquered by the Love of Chriſt ſo fully to give up myſelf, yet thro'

thro' Senſe of Want and Miſery, and ſome old Love to Chriſt, and withal hoping it might be a Mean to do me Good, and willing to comply with a Command, I did legally and affectionately diſpone my Heart to Chriſt: "O Lord, ſaid I, "tho' I cannot command this evil Heart to love "thee, nor myſelf to ſerve thee; yet, if I have "Power or Right of it, I hear legally renounce "that Right in thy favours, and by thir Preſents "make over myſelf to thee, and all that is with-"in me: Now, Lord, take me at my Word, and "take Advantage of this to claim me as thine own; "accept the real Motions of my Will: Oh that "Chriſt would now look on me as his, and pre-"tend Right to me, and make Uſe of this Right!" In the Strength of this I walked for ſome Time, tho' it did not always ſatisfy: For I could not believe that tho' I was ſincere and affectionate in this, that ever my Diſpoſition could give Chriſt a Right to me, unleſs he likewiſe did accept it. "Lord, thou offereſt thyſelf to me (ſaid I) "and I cannot take thee; Lord, I likewiſe offer "myſelf to thee, thou mayſt take me, but wilt "not: Oh! others take Advantage of my Bar-"gains; Oh that Chriſt would do ſo, and chal-"lenge a Claim and Right to me! Lord, thou "ſayſt thou art willing to do me Good; Lord, "I offer myſelf to thee to do with me what thou "wilt; only let me not be guided by myſelf." Here came I, and I did ſtick and wreſtle for ſome Time ſtriving to come forth. This was in *July*, and I continued till the latter End of *Auguſt* thus.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Relating ſome Things touching my Humiliation and Wilderneſs-condition.

§ 1. THE Frame and Exerciſe of my Heart while in this Condition was, *1mo*, I found great Deadneſs and Hardneſs of Heart; and this I mourned under, as my greateſt Evil. I now thought I could never win to be ſo ſenſible of my Condition as I ought to be, and in my Heart I deſired a Law-work again. *2do*, I was in great Blindneſs and Diſtance with Chriſt, and therefore much lamented my Ignorance of him; and therefore was unſatisfied with my greateſt Attainments, in reſpect I ſaw not himſelf; or, if I did, it was very darkly. *3tio*, I wanted Aſſurance, and was in the Dark as to my Intereſt, and rather was inclined to think myſelf not converted than converted, and was ſeeking and hoping for ſomething; and any Thing I met with made me rejoice, as it was an Evidence of ſome Good to come to me, rather than as it was a Token of any Good already gotten: I had no Foundations ſettled. *4to*, I was unconſtant; my *Goodneſs* was *as the Morning-dew*, ſo as my great Complaints were that my Heart would not retain or keep the Divine Impreſſions that were on it now and then, *Hoſ.* vi. 4. *5to*, I was full of Unbelief, conſtructing hardly of God and of his Ways, and of myſelf; which Unbelief, tho' as yet I ſaw it not as a Sin, yet did me much Evil: I thought ill that I was delivered from my Terrors, *Exod.* xvii. 3. *6to*, I was tormented with this, That I met not with that Sweetneſs

neſs and Fellowſhip in Ordinances as I deſired, but barren for the moſt Part to my Soul; not being thankful for the Day of ſmall Things, ſuch as Quickning, Healing, Encouragement and Comfort; and not humbled for Wants when nothing was ſpoken to me. 7*mo*, There was Security and Unwatchfulneſs, whereby my Heart was ready to grow careleſs, by which I continually fell to ſome Sins of Converſation, which did break my Peace.

§ 2. I ordinarily then ſlipt in theſe Sins, which did break my Peace: 1*mo*, Departing from God in Heart, in turning ſecure and careleſs, and ſuffering my Heart to go out of all Tune, thro' not walking as in the Sight of God. 2*do*, Senſuality in the immoderate Uſe of Comforts, being naturally given to Appetite. 3*tio*, Idle vain Words, and vain Converſation. 4*to*, Unprofitable ſpending of Time, and not improving Opportunities and Occaſions of Good, letting my Generation-work ly by. 5*to*, Carnality in all my Actions civil and religious, not doing Things ſpiritually. 6*to*, Sloth in going about the Means; beſide the inward Evils of Pride, Murmuring and Unbelief, and want of Love and Fear.

§ 3. But as the Lord ſhewed Kindneſs to his People in the Wilderneſs, notwithſtanding all their Provocations, ſo did he to me; and I obſerved his Love during this Time in ſeveral Particulars: 1*mo*, When I was in Hazard to ſleep the Sleep of Death, and to depart from the Lord thro' my Diſcouragements and Plagues of Heart, Evil and carnal Company; What Mercy was it, to clear me from my Diſcouragements, to take me to the Wilderneſs from the Crowd of the

World, and againſt the Stream of Indiſpoſitions, Sloth and Diſcouragements; to perſwade and make me return and ſeek the Lord in the Uſe of all Means, *if ſo be there might be Hope*, when I had no Mind of it, nor Heart to it? How did he convince me that my Time was not yet gone; that when I was departed, and like to fall, nay, far gone in a Conſumption of which I would have died, that I ſhould be prevented and healed, and that he ſhould renew his Kindneſs, and would not let me depart for ever, but ſtirred me up to ſeek the Lord? He *found* me *in an howling Wilderneſs*, ready to periſh, gaſping out my laſt, *Deut.* xxxii. 10. There had I periſhed for ever; but the Lord made a ſecond Voyage for me, he *came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt*. 2*do*, What Love and Mercy was in this, that when thro' Senſe of Deadneſs, ſpiritual Wilderneſs-wants, fierce Tentations, and great Darkneſs, I was ready to go back unto *Egypt*, or to faint in the Way, that he ſhould have given me Water out of the Rock, and ſhould by Viſitations have upholden my Spirit, and by theſe encouraged me, and kept in my dying Life, training me on Piece and Piece? 3*tio*, But oh what ſhall I think of his continued Mercy, his being ever with me? Tho' I was wild, weak, and unworthy, and ſinful, and ever deſtroying myſelf; yet all my Steps were guided by him, he was ever with me, pitying me, ever ſparing me, ever relieving in my Extremity, and preventing my utter Ruin; ſo that all this Time he was with me in Love, Long-ſuffering, Pity and Goodneſs, when I could not ſhift for myſelf at all. How long did I *ſtay in the Place of the breaking forth of Children*,

dren, and was no way profitable to him at all; doing no Good in the World, and thro' Unbelief conſtructing all to the worſt? Yet was he ſtill with me, and never left me until he had brought me unto a *Rock higher than I.* Oh what unwearied Pains and Coſt was he at! Oh ſhall I ever forget his Condeſcendency! I thought ill that mine Evils came thro' mine own Default: For tho' I ſhould turn dead and God had left me, if I had then been on my Watch-Tower I would not care; but the Lord would have my Reſtoration of free Grace from himſelf. Readily then I would ſay, It was my Waiting and Watching and Diligence that did recover me; Oh not! but when ſinful, when aſleep, when given over, he would come, that it might appear, *not for your Sakes do I this, but for my Name's Sake.* There was not only Wiſdom, Power and Pity, but likewiſe a coming over my Sins, and great Mercy; and now I think it no worſe, and no leſs comfortable, that my Mercies had his Name engraven on them, even his Grace, tho' there be not ſuch Ground for Boaſting: I was indeed the Buſh burning, and not conſumed. Lord, *What is Man, that thou lookeſt on him, and viſits him every Morning?* Job vii. 17, 18.

§ 4. I remember, when I came to *Edinburgh* firſt, and not having Room to pray, and likewiſe overcome with Diſcouragements, not ſeeing an End of my Labours, I began to faint and weary; and the Lord let me alone for a while, and I grew worſe and worſe: Until one Sabbath-day I went to hear an able Miniſter, and much cried up; but there was ſuch a Throng, that I could not get him heard, nor to any other Church in the

Town; only I ſtumbled at laſt in the *Engliſh* Church which was then in the Town, with no great Hope to get any Good. The Miniſter preached on theſe Words, *A bruiſed Reed will he not break.* What ſhall I ſay? The Lord aſſiſted him with ſuch Power, and he ſpoke ſo ſeaſonably to me, that I was again revived and ſet in the Way, and reſolved to hold on till I ſhould find the Lord; yea, it was then that I had ſome Thoughts that I was converted, and ſome of my ordinary Objections were anſwered.

§ 5. I began again to faint and depart, becauſe I thought never one was in my Condition: And, being in a Conference with a godly Man, he told me the Hiſtory of his Converſion, and what brave Days he had ſeen, and how that nothing now was but Deadneſs, Carnality and Unbelief. This had ſuch Influence, that again my Heart was lifted up in the Ways of the Lord, and that I was not ſingular, but my Caſe was common, and therefore reſolved to ſeek the Lord. And at the ſame Time I got in my Hands a Piece of Mr. *Shepherd*'s I had never ſeen before, which the Lord bleſſing, after ſome Conſideration I reſolved once more to aſſault the City, and to beſeech God more earneſtly than ever I had done before, which I was helped in ſome Meaſure to do, and found the Profit of it.

§ 6. A while after, fainting and giving over, I read on Mr. *Shepherd*'s *Sound Believer* concerning Soul-humiliation, where he ſpeaks to this Purpoſe: "One Way by which the Lord Jeſus "(ſaith he) in the Day of his Power doth humble "a poor Sinner, is, by letting him ſee the Wild-"neſs of his own Heart and Duties; whereby the

" the Soul thinks, Can theſe that are ſo wild ſave " me? And then (ſaith he) the Souls thinks, " tho' for the preſent I be not well, yet hopes it " ſhall do better in Proceſs of Time, and there- " upon falls to afreſh; but Chriſt loads and " wearies the Soul with Duties; and, after all " its Labour, the Soul findeth itſelf worſe than " before: And here again the Soul falleth down, " finding itſelf to row againſt both Wind and " Tide." Well (quoth I) this is like me, and this is it which God is doing with me: But, alas, my Heart is hard, and I never felt Conviction and Compunction yet; how can I be come to Humiliation then? Well, I read further, until he brings the humbled Soul to ſpeak thus; " Oh " miſerable Wretch that I am, never worſe than " now: Once I could mourn, and pray, and " ſorrow, and never well but when out of one " Duty into another; but now a dead, blind, " hard Heart ſeizeth upon me, ſo as I can get " nothing done." Here I ſtopt, and ſaid, Then bleſſed be the Lord, that hath not let me alone, but given me ſo much Light as to diſcern my Way, and where I am. And is God indeed humbling me, and preparing me for Chriſt? I ſee that God hath left me to my Deadneſs, that the Senſe thereof might draw me to Chriſt; for, as the ſame Author ſaith, " More are drawn to " Chriſt under the Senſe of a dead blind Heart, " than by all Sorrows, Humiliations and " Terrors." I truſt God, that hath begun the Work, will finiſh it. I was wonderfully ſtrength- ned by this; 'tis good to be in God's Hands, howſoever Matters be. With theſe and the like was my Spirit kept up in this Wilderneſs.

§ 7. I have been ſearching into the Lord's Ends in this to me, and am never more ſatisfied than when I conclude them to be, 1*mo*, That I might know all the Evil in my Heart, my Weakneſs and Sinfulneſs, that thereby I might be humbled, who have ſo often departed, and whoſe whole Life was a Grieving of God, *Deut.* viii. 2. 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31. *John* ii. 25. 2*do*, That I might thereby be made acquaint with the Methods and Way of Converſion, with which, thro' my haſty Incoming, I was not ſo well acquaint; God did now as it were act over again Converſion; he convinced me, not only of actual Sins, but of Heart-ſins and Heart-plagues, and of that Fountain-Sin of Nature which continually departed from God, and fiercely reſiſted him in all his Ways; he convinced me that I could not help myſelf, and that neither Prayers nor Means could help me; that I could neither buy nor conquer Heaven: He *wearied* me with Duties and Enlargements, and *in the Greatneſs of my Way*, and loaded me with the Multitude of my Counſels and Inventions; At laſt he humbled me and calmed me, and made me believe. So that I think the Lord deſigned to acquaint me with the Method of Converſion, that I might be the more enabled to edify others, *Acts* v. 32. being myſelf a *Witneſs*, and not *heard* it only, but alſo *felt* and *ſeen*, that I might ſpeak to this Purpoſe, 1 *John* i. 1. *Pſal.* xxxiv. 4, 6, 11. *Not ignorant of his Devices*, 2 Cor. ii. 11. 3*tio*, That God might do me much Good in the End; of which I had Promiſe given me, and rationally and ſeaſonably born in upon my Spirit, from *Deut.* viii. 16. in one of my dolorous Hours, *Heb.* xii.

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11. *Jer.* xxv. 4. I indeed expect much Good from all this Preparation and hard Beginning. *4to*, I look upon this as the only Way to preſerve me from Backſliding. By theſe Means, and by emptying me from Veſſel to Veſſel, came it to paſs that mine Eyes were kept waking, and from ſettling on my Lees; for I might perceive by Scripture and ſad Experience, that many were full of their own Enlargements and Graces, and ſo fix'd as they thought they had no more ado, and therefore, like that rich Man, *Luke* xii. ſaid, *Soul, take thy Reſt, thou haſt enough for many Days.* The fooliſh Virgins thought their great Buſineſs was done; by which Means, being as they ſuppoſed paſt all Danger, they ſlumbered and ſlept, and thro' Sloth loſt all; and, being ſettled on their Lees, loſt all, and backſlided and apoſtatiſed miſerably, and loſt all Life: But the Lord kept mine Eyes waking, and gave me ſtill my Hands full ado; and, when I would ſeek Reſt, the Lord by a new Storm would awaken me again; when diſcouraged through Fears, Temptations, Deſertions and Sins, and ſo like to give over becauſe no Hope, then would the Lord revive; and when I would ſay, *'Tis good to be here, let us make Tabernales*, then a Cloud would come; ſo as, by lifting up and caſting down, I was daily kept in Exerciſe, depending, praying and fighting, *Judg.* iii. 1. *Pſal.* lxxiii. 3, 4, 5, 14. *Jer.* xlviii. 11. *Pſal.* lv. 19. *Job* vii. 18. *5to*, To manifeſt to me, and to give me Experience of his Love, Condeſcendency and Conſtancy, who in all my Ways was with me, and that has never left me until he had his Work wrought in me, that preſerved me in this great

Wilderneſs, that did bear with my Manners there, that ſupplied me continually in my Extremities, *Deut.* viii. 5. *6to*, To beat me out of my Self-righteouſneſs, Worthineſs and Senſe, that thereby I might be faſtned on the *Rock higher than I*, that finding no Reſt for the Sole of my Foot by Duties and Enlargements, but they decaying under me, I might ſeek Reſt where it might be found, *Mat.* xi. 28. that, theſe ſandy Foundations being razed, I might build on that which will endure for ever, and thereby ſtand out all Storms; for theſe good Moods I was in could not comfort me or uphold me when my Conſcience was diſtreſs'd, nor yet could they maintain themſelves, but ſtill decayed: And therefore, this not being my Reſt, I was to ſeek it another Way, *Jer.* l. 6. and that I might know Man's Life is not upholden by Means as by the Lord in or without them; *Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* For this is natural to us, to depend upon what our Eyes ſee, and not to look to him who is inviſible, who indeed is *All in all.* Now, the Inſufficiency of Duties and Self-righteouſneſs did appear by theſe Things; *1ſt*, I never had full Peace by them in their beſt, nor could they anſwer all Accuſations; ſome Bone was ſtill ſticking. *2dly*, They could not give full Satisfaction nor Contentment; ſomething was wanting; they were Bread which ſatisfied not. *3dly*, The Roots of Sin did not appear to be taken away, and there was but little Advantage gotten againſt Corruption, it appeared ſtill in its Strength; and but very indiſcernible Growth in Grace. *4thly*, It could not hold out

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in Temptations; but, whenever there came a Storm, I was dung on my Back, giving all Hopes over. *5thly*, When Deadneſs came, there was no Subſtance in what I met with to quicken me, as I now find in the Promiſes and Fleſh and Blood of Jeſus Chriſt. *6thly*, They could not laſt, but periſh'd when I was revived; and therefore finding this, and that I but ſpent my Strength in vain for *Bread that profiteth not*, I was made dead to them, and had no Comfort in them or from them, but in ſo far as they were Appearances of Chriſt's Coming, and did prognoſticate that he was not far away; and therefore look'd up for that Bread which endureth for ever. Surely this is not my Reſt; I wanted Security, Satisfaction and Strength in all theſe Things. The *6th* End was, To break my Pride and Stubbornneſs; which did not kyth ſo much in good Thoughts of myſelf (for I ſaw I was empty) but in this, in liking to ſave myſelf by my own Strength, and Means and Way: For, when I was beat out of all this, I thought that if I would wait, and not depart wickedly from God, I ſhould herein have Peace; and upon this projected to myſelf certain Rules by which to walk. This I put no Queſtion to do and keep, and was confident enough, and would have no other Way but this, becauſe this was my own chuſing, and that with a ſecret End of exalting myſelf, and getting a Name before God of a righteous Perſon: But God ſeeing me *ſet my Heart as the Heart of God*, Ezek. xxviii. 2. and abhorring the Pride thereof, did reſiſt me continually; and what by Deſertions, what by Temptations, did ſo order it, as I was unable to keep my Reſolu-

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tions, his Counſel ſtanding, and my Reſolutions falling; and, *in the Thing wherein I dealt proudly, he was above me.* I fell many Times, nay, almoſt every Time, thro' Unwatchfulneſs; and this made me murmur and grieve more that my Purpoſes were broken, and the Building I had framed like the Spider's Web hurl'd down, than that God was diſhonoured, *Prov.* xix. 3. My Fooliſhneſs perverted my Way, and my Heart fretted againſt the Lord, and likewiſe fretted that, the Caſe being ſo, he ſhould puniſh: I gave no Glory to God, who had *Power over theſe Plagues*, Rev. xvi. 9. And notwithſtanding I fell, yet, like *Tyrus*, I would ſay, *I was God*, to him before whom I fell, *Ezek.* xxviii. 2. and would ever be trying to eſtabliſh my own Righteouſneſs, not acknowledging my own Inſufficiency, nor acknowledging that it is God that doth what he wills, and that none ſaith and it cometh to paſs but God: And God by his Providences did prove this, and made me like an Ox eat Graſs; yet would not I be convinced that the moſt High ruleth, and 'tis yet a Part of my Exerciſe to get quit of this Spirit, *Ezek.* xxviii. 6, 9. *Dan.* iv. 25, 27. *Exod.* xviii. 11. And therefore it came to paſs that the Lord did conſtantly cruſh me in my Will and Reſolutions: And, when he was pleaſed to ſhew Mercy, it was neither in the Time, Way or Manner when I either reſolved to have it, or expected or deſired; and all this to let me know that the moſt High directeth the Ways of Man, and that Grace is a Man's beſt Charter, and to bow and break this Will to ſubmit to God in all Diſpenſations, and to be carried to my Journey's End what Way

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ſoever he pleaſed, tho' through Mire and Dirt; *Ezek.* xx. 32. *That which cometh in your Thoughts ſhall not at all be.*

§ 8. From which I obſerve this; 1*mo*, That Folk may contract by Backſliding what they will not in a very long Time recover again, and the Dregs of it may remain after they are indeed begun to return to the Lord; 'tis not eaſy to twin with Sin, *Joſh.* xxii. 17. The Iniquity of *Baal-peor*, tho' long ſince contracted, and much Coſt wared on it, yet not purged away until this Day. The Security and Indiſpoſitions I then contracted, I am not free from yet. 2*do*, A Man's whole Life is but a Converſion; and the Lord after every kind of Backſliding draws after the ſame Way as at the firſt Converſion, yea, and deals ſo with them as they may ſeem never to have been converted before, *Mat.* xviii. 3. Yea, I found a more diſtinct preparatory Work after my firſt Drawing than ever before: For the Lord did Things in a Clap at firſt, and in a very little Time did let me ſee that I was undone, that I was not converted nor could convert myſelf; and the Inſufficiency of Duties and an unconverted Condition, with God's Wrath, had ſome Impreſſions on my Spirit: And then the Lord revealed Chriſt unto me, on whom I believed, and with whom I cloſed. But now the Lord did draw me very clearly, and did inſiſt in every Step ſo, as that all the Knowledge I have of the Work of Preparations, I have it from what I met with after I knew Chriſt, more than from what I met with at firſt. 3*tio*, The ſtrongeſt, laſt and bittereſt Enemy the Lord hath, and which he abhorreth moſt, is ſpiritual Pride; againſt this he ſet-

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teth himſelf mainly, I mean, the vain-glorious Confidence Folk have in their own Strength, and to be ſaved by their own Righteouſneſs, and to have their own Wills fulfilled. 'Tis hard to get our high Conceits down, and 'tis hard to get the Will broken to be ſubmiſſive to the Lord's Will in all Diſpenſations, and 'tis hard to get Folk to gloriſy God and make Uſe of his Righteouſneſs, *Ezek.* xxviii. 9. *Prov.* xix. 3. 'Tis eaſy to let a Man ſee he is not converted, that he cannot ſave himſelf; but 'tis hard perſuading him that he can do nothing, not ſo much as to be thankful for the leaſt Mercy: Ye will not perſuade him to live and live only in, to, and by another, and ſubmit himſelf, his Will in all Things to God, and with a holy Contentedneſs to ſubmit to have his Reſolutions broken, and God glorified; and contented and ſatisfied in this, that the Counſel of the Lord hath taken Effect. 4*to*, 'Tis the Frequency and Conſtancy of God's Waterings that doth Good, rather than any Meaſure of a particular Fit or Viſitation; and from this more Love may be gathered, *John* xv. 7. *If my Words abide in you. He that endureth to the End ſhall be ſaved. Balaam* had a ſtrange Fit. Theſe Waterings, thro' their Frequency and Conſtancy, in Proceſs of Time did Good, did ſanctify, did humble, did make me delight in Duty, and draw to God and from the World. *Gutta cavat lapidem non vi ſed ſæpe cadendo.* Hoſ. iii. 3. *Thou ſhalt abide for me many Days.* And that which cometh by Degrees hath moſt Laſt. 5*to*, Unwatchfulneſs is a conſtant and only Evil, prejudicial to a Progreſs in Grace, *Mat.* xxvi. 41. 6*to*, *Man liveth not by Bread alone, but*

but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God. I owe any Thing that was wrought in me to his Grace and Goodneſs, and not to my own Reſolutions, nor to any Means whatſomever. *O People ſaved by the Lord.* I did by many Experiences find a Horſe a vain Help. *7mo,* Folk in returning to God are drawn by Degrees, *by little and little,* and not all at once: As firſt to put in their Heart to ſeek God, then a Remiſneſs, then a turning more ſerious, then to find more Sweetneſs in the Lord and his Ways: *By little and little will I drive them out.* And therefore Folk may be converted, tho' they remember not of any ſpecial Day, that might be as a Time to paſs Reckoning upon; do as ye may, and be drawn according to God's Will, who *leads the Blind in a Way that they know not.* *8vo,* The Way to Heaven is a tedious, wearieſom, narrow and ſtrait Gate, even a terrible and great Wilderneſs, *Deut.* viii. 15. that Heaven may be the ſweeter when it comes. Oh how much Need of Patience is there! and what Thankfulneſs owe we, when we come to any Place where there are Fountains of Water! Let us not think ſtrange if thus we find it. *9no,* There is not poſſibly in ſome ſo much ſenſible Joy as at their firſt Converſion, of which many Reaſons may be given; no ſuch Singing as when brought out of *Egypt*; the *fatted Calf* is ſlain at firſt, *Luke* xv. 23. The Gold and Prize is ſeen at the Break of the Race, and at the Race's End; Folk have moſt Need of it then. They were not ſent to the War the firſt Year. *10mo,* All muſt be in ſome Meaſure humbled ere they get any Good; meekned and made ſilent before, and

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ſubmiſſive to God, *Lev.* xxvi. 41. *11mo,* All Exerciſes as to Circumſtances are not alike in Chriſtians; one Chriſtian's Pace is not a Method or a Rule for another. *12mo,* There may be Wearying and Loading, and real Humiliation, tho' there be no Terrors on the Soul. *13tio,* Senſe of a dead hard Heart are an effectual Means to draw to Chriſt, yea, and more effectual than any other can be, becauſe *dead, miſerable and naked,* Rev. iii. 18. *14to,* God is ever carrying on his Work in a Soul, or in a Kingdom, tho' we do not always perceive it: For he carries it on inſenſibly; the Seed grows, and thou knoweſt not how; he hath his Way in the Storms: *I girded thee with Strength, tho' thou knoweſt not.* Yea, when we think he is ſtanding ſtill, or going backward, yet he is going forwards. *15to,* Hope is the firſt Step of Recovery, and all the Sorrows of the Elect have Hope in them; therefore let every one labour to ſettle this well, *Ezra* x. 2. *There is Hope, therefore let us turn.* *16to,* The Beginnings of Grace are very ſmall, poor and unpromiſing, like a Grain of Muſtard-Seed, *Mat.* xiii. 31. *Ezek.* xlvii. 3, 4, 5.

SECT. III.

How I was drawn to God, and made to cloſe with him by Faith.

FOR any Thing I could learn of myſelf, or diſcern, I had the Seeds of Grace and Faith before this Time; but yet I lived more by Senſe than any other Way, and therefore I fell and roſe as Senſe was up or down, and ſo never came to any Settlement, like a Wave toſſed up and down:

And

And ſo the Lord, intending to ſettle me, did beat me from Senſe, and made me learn a more excellent Way, even to live by Faith. I knew there was a Reſt, whereof I knew little; only I thought it was an Eſtate of conſtant Joy and Life, wherein the Spirit would evermore triumph againſt the Fleſh, and wherein all Actings would be pure and cleanly: And thus, like the *Jews* and Diſciples, I dreamed of a Heaven on Earth, tho' not of an earthly Kingdom. But that which was indeed my Reſt, to which he that believeth hath entred in, I never ſo much as dreamed of it: For I thought Faith was ſome extraordinary Rapture, and ſeeing of Chriſt with great Fulgor and Glory; this I thought to be Faith, or the Ground of it. But the Lord came in the *calm Voice*, and Chriſt grew *like a tender Plant out of a dry Ground*, Luke xvii. 20. Zech. iv. 6. And indeed the Foundation of this ſecond Temple was far leſs glorious in Appearance than the firſt: Oh how was I miſtaken! It was leſs in my Thoughts, that ſuch a dead, blind, carnal ſinful Soul ſhould be called to believe and depend moſt confidently on Chriſt, and that without any Sign from Heaven, but upon the bare Warrant of his Word in Scripture: The Way and Manner whereof, as I remember, I ſhall ſet down; which was the tenth and laſt Step of my Recovery.

§ 1. Finding therefore no Reſt in my Exerciſe of Self-reſignation, for the Cauſes above and formerly expreſt, I began to be very ſorrowful and diſconſolate, and, like *Pharaoh's* Chariots, to drive on heavily. I continued waiting in the Means; and one Day, as I was reading in my ordinary, I read theſe Words in *Hag.* ii. 17.

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I ſmote you in all the Labour of your Hands, yet ye turned not to me, ſaith the Lord. I applied this ſpiritually; that is, thought I, God hath ſmitten me in all my Labours, Duties, Reſolutions and Vows, and for all this I turned not to God; But wherein am I not turned? Wherein ſhall I return? How ſo? Have I not left my Sins, mourned, prayed, read and meditated? What remains yet to be done? What Duty or Mean do I ſlight? What Pains in my Power have I withholden? I therefore caſt mine Eyes upon all Duties; and, while I was thus ſearching, ſome bleſſed Motion was ſuggeſted to me, That I had all my Lifetime ſlighted the Duty of Believing, and had not turned to God by Faith; and therefore, until this thou do, God will ever continue in ſmiting thee in all the Labours of thy Hand, for *without Faith 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God*: And it hath been the Want of this, and this only, that hath blaſted thee in all thine Endeavours. Faith, quoth I aſtoniſhed, what is this! What, me believe, that am ſo wild, ſo unprepared, ſo dead, ſo little priſing of Chriſt! It cannot be; Lord, now keep from a Deluſion. Yes, Faith, of which ſo much is ſpoken in Scripture, of which thou knoweſt ſo little, that is the main Grace, ſaid the Spirit. Theſe Things made me ſome way apprehenſive of the Matter.

§ 2. I therefore, in the ſecond Place, was made to conſider the Matter, and I found that Faith had a great Place in Religion; and withal, looking to myſelf, I found that I had very little practiſed it, and was as great a Stranger to it as theſe Diſciples, *Acts* xix. 1, 2. were to the Knowledge of the Holy Ghoſt: I knew not what

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it was, nor had formerly exerciſed it, or diſtinctly and expreſly heard of it, nay, knew not that it was my Duty; for this ill Principle remained with me, *viz.* I believed that none ſhould believe but Perſons ſo and ſo qualified, and that the Ground thereof was ſome ſenſible Manifeſtation of Glory, which until I could find, I thought I was to ly in my Priſon and mourn, *John* xvi. 9.

§ 3. The Lord did convince me fully that I ſhould believe, and that it was the Duty of every one: For, as I ſaid before, I thought that only Perſons ſo and ſo qualified were bound to believe; but the merciful Lord himſelf did unlooſe this Knot, by calling me to him, convincing me that it was my Duty ſo to do; and thereby the Chains wherewith *Satan* had for a long Time bound me, and kept me from the diſtinct Exerciſe and Life of Faith, were broken: And that which is wonderful is; I heard it an hundred Times preſs'd in Sermons, to believe, and yet until that Day was never perſwaded it was my Duty to believe, nor never minded that Exerciſe at all. The Grounds whereby I was then perſwaded to believe, or that Believing was my Duty, yea, and that all were bound to believe, which was the firſt Point, were theſe; *1ſt*, That Scripture, 1 *John* iii. 23. *This is his Commandment, that ye believe on the Name of the Son of God.* Then 'tis commanded, concluded I; and why is it not Duty? Nay, is it not the great Command? Doſt thou queſtion that Prayer is thy Duty? Truly 'tis thy Duty, becauſe commanded: Then Faith, or Receiving of Chriſt, being commanded likewiſe, it is thy Duty as well as Prayer. *2dly*, Wicked unregenerate Men are commanded to be-

believe; and 'tis the great Duty, more acceptable and well pleaſing to God than any thou canſt perform, *John* vi. 28. *What is the Work of God, that we ſhould work it?* The Anſwer, Verſe 29th, was very contrary to their Expectations and Thoughts, *This is the Work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*; this is the firſt, the great Command, and a Command tying graceleſs Perſons ſuch as were the *Jews*. 3*dly*, That Scripture was brought to my Mind, *Rom.* iv. 20. Abraham *by believing glorified God*, compared with *Num.* xx. 12. *Becauſe ye believed not, to ſanctify my Name before this People, therefore ye ſhall not bring this People into the Land promiſed.* Now, ſeeing Believing glorifies God, thou art bound unto it; for every Man is bound to glorify God: Who queſtions this? Now, Believing glorifies God, in acknowledging his Power, Goodneſs and rich Grace. 4*thly*, The Spirit urged this Argument, The Wicked are puniſhed for not believing, therefore 'tis their Duty to believe. See *Pſal.* lxxviii. 32, 33. *He conſumed their Days in Vanity*, becauſe they *believed not* on him; and ſo ſhall he do with thee if thou do not believe. 5*thly*, This was confirmed to me by the firſt Scripture, and by the Language of ſome Providences: What elſe could I call my continual Diſappointments, and fruitleſs Labours, but a Call to me to try what this might do? My Days were conſumed, and therefore by my Stroke I might read my Sin.

§ 4. The Lord having by theſe perſwaded and convinced me that it was my Duty to believe, and rolled this Stone away from the Sepulchre; he

he proceeded next to anſwer my manifold Objections, which then did begin to ſwarm and keep me from believing. The main were, *1ſt*, I cannot believe; and therefore, why am I called to believe? 'Tis the Gift of God, and why ſhould I hammer out a Faith of my own Bowels? This will not be accepted. It was anſwered, The Lord, by thus drawing and inviting thee, gives thee Power to come, as it was when he called on dead *Lazarus* to live and come forth. And beſides, thou canſt not ſanctify a Sabbath, nor pray; yet 'tis thy Duty, and thou goeſt about it as thou canſt: So do here. Yea, to the Wearied and Loadned, and called thus, 'tis not impoſſible. A *2d* Objection was, I fear I may preſume. It was anſwered, To believe, in Obedience to a Command, is no Preſumption: When thou receiveſt Chriſt, and in this Act believes on and reſts in him for Pardon, this being Obedience cannot be Preſumption, for 'tis no Preſumption to obey God; to believe uncalled, is Preſumption or unwarrantable. Objection *3d*. I am not enough humbled, my Heart is dead and hard, and I am altogether inſenſible of my Condition; and therefore, how can I be called to believe? for 'tis the *Weary* and *Heavy-ladned* that are called to come. It was anſwered, It may be ſo, but this gives no Right to come; 'tis the Call and Command of God, and Goſpel-offers, which give a Right, and not any Qualification: And beſides, I read in Mr. *Gray* at the ſame Time, that theſe that are wearied and loadned are rather theſe that will come, than thoſe that ought to come. Thou art miſerable and naked and wild; all is true: But how can it be otherwiſe, when

thou haſt lived at ſuch a Diſtance with Chriſt who is the Fountain of Life? If thou wouldſt believe, he would give thee what thou wants; there is no other Way of receiving Life but by coming to him, *John* v. 40. Objection *4th*. But I cannot prize Chriſt, nor am I prepared. It was anſwered, That as Faith fetches all from him, ſo fetches it prizing of him too; for if Faith fetches all from Chriſt, then it brings nothing to Chriſt but Deadneſs, Blindneſs and Sinfulneſs: Come to him for Grace to prize him; if thou once wouldſt *believe*, then Chriſt would be *precious* to thee, 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. Emptineſs is the beſt Qualification; *The Hungry he filleth with good Things, but the Rich he ſendeth away empty.* There is no more required than what makes thee be willing to accept him; if therefore thou be willing to accept Chriſt, thou prizeſt him ſufficiently, and art ſufficiently prepared. Objection *5th*. Thou finds no glorious Power drawing thee. It was anſwered, Yet I find the Lord in his Word really calling me, and this is as ſufficient a Ground to thee as tho' he came perſonally and viſibly here and deſired this of thee; and therefore do now what thou wouldſt do then: His Word is the *more ſure Word of Prophecy*, ſurer than the Voice that came down from Heaven. Objection *6th*. But I find no Good after I believe. It was anſwered, No more do Saints at firſt, *Hoſ.* vi. 2. *After two Days will he come and revive us.* 'Tis not by coming to him, but by *abiding in him*, that Fruit is brought forth. I confeſs, by the anſwering of theſe Objections, and by other Arguments, the Lord did ſenſibly and ſeaſonably, and with a ſtrong Hand, convince me that it was

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my Duty to believe. Oh will he take ſuch a vile Worm as I! Yes, he will; for thou art the fitteſt Perſon in the World for him to glorify his Grace on. The Lord did inceſſantly follow me with theſe Thoughts, yea, I found a ſenſible Power dealing with me.

§ 5. The Lord did not only draw me to conclude that Believing was my Duty, and anſwered my Objections; but by other Arguments perſwaded me to go about this Duty of believing on, and cloſing with Chriſt. The main Motives were, *1ſt*, Doſt thou not ſee how earneſt God is with thee? He commands, invites, threatens thee; hath at laſt opened thy blind Eyes to let thee ſee thy Duty, looſed all thy Objections, and hath now this long Time waited on thee: Oh! open at laſt, and yield to his Importunity, *Rev.* iii. 20. *2dly*, Know it, if thou wilt not anſwer, and quickly anſwer, God will away and leave thee, and there will be no more Knocking, but all this Work ſhall die, and thou ſhalt never be converted, *Prov.* i. 24, &c. *3dly*, There is nothing more pleaſing to God than Believing: Behold how the Angels are expecting and wiſhing in their Hearts that now there may be a Match made, *Luke* xv. 7. and ii. 13. This will pleaſe the Lord for all the Ills that thou haſt done him, nothing thou canſt do can be ſo pleaſing to him; for this is the End of all Diſpenſations, and the great Command: Now, make amends for all ye have done, *John* vi. 28. *4thly*, Conſider the Duty itſelf; 'tis the giving of thy Heart to Chriſt, and receiving of him, and believing in him. Hath he been at ſuch Pains, and taken thy rotten Righteouſneſs away, and now comes

and offers himſelf to thee, beſeeches thee to love him, looſes all thy Objections? Oh ſlight not this great Salvation: Slight any Duty, but trample not on Love; Love for Love is the leaſt that can be given, *Heb.* ii. 3. 5thly, *Without Faith 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God.* Pray, ſuffer and do what thou wilt, all is Abomination if not in Faith; I care for nothing if this be wanting, ſaith the Lord, *Heb.* xi. 6. *6thly*, The ſoreſt Puniſhments are abiding Unbelief; and therefore, if thou refuſe this Offer, all thy Sins that ever thou did, thy Blaſphemy, Sabbath-breaking, *&c.* will be but as Flea-bites to this, *Acts* xiii. 41. It ſhall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* than for thee: Better never have prayed, but lived a profane Atheiſt, than come this Length and ſtick; God will go away ſhortly, and thou ſhalt wander and decay, and one to a hundred but thou ſin that Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, *Heb.* vi. 6. for never waſt thou indeed enlightned till now; and now refuſe, and let this Heat cool, and thou mayſt be hardned. *7thly*, Conſider, if Chriſt were now in thy Chamber, and were bidding and intreating thee with Tears in his Eyes to receive him, and offering himſelf to thee, and ſaying to thee, O thou wretchedeſt of Sinners, By all theſe Sorrows I endured for thee, I adjure thee grieve me no more with thine Unbelief, but receive me and my Offers, and ſo glorify my Grace: Wouldſt thou not do it, and wonder at this Love? Oh Chriſt doth it as really now, *Rom.* x. 8. *The Word is near thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart.* 8*thly*, Conſider what thou ſhalt have by this: Thou ſhalt get Life, Light, Reſt and Conſolation; and that which is

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vain thou haſt been ſeeking by thy own Righteouſneſs, thou ſhalt by Faith get, nay, be able to work impoſſible Things; thy dead Heart ſhall live, thy blind Eyes ſhall ſee him, thy lame Hands and Feet ſhall leap and work, and by this Way only ſhalt thou have Peace. With theſe and the like Arguments did the Lord court my Soul to himſelf.

§ *6.* The Lord did by ſuitable Providences back the Call of his Word upon my Spirit; for on a Day of private Humiliation it was my ordinary to read *Heb.* xi. and Firſt Epiſtle of *Peter*, where ſo much is ſpoken of Faith: The Lord likewiſe made *Shepherd*'s *Sound Believer* uſeful to me, which till now I perceived I never underſtood; then all Scriptures concerning Faith, and Treatiſes ſpeaking thereof, and Meditations of it, were ſweet, which now I began ſomething to underſtand. I was now come as it were to a new World, and there was ſuch a Stir upon my Spirit as I never found the like before: Fain would I believe, but ah I could not! I found a Spirit of Reſiſtance, there was a Blindneſs upon my Eyes; I knew not what Believing was, nor on whom. On the one Hand, the Lord by his Commands, Motives, earneſt and real Invitations, Promiſes, and anſwering Objections, yea, and terrible Threatnings in caſe of Unbelief, haſtning me and puſhing me forward, and that ſpeedily; for all Doors were ſhut but this of Faith: For I could neither pray nor do any Thing, in reſpect of the Sinfulneſs of it without Faith, and therefore this behoved to be my firſt Work. On the other Hand, Ignorance of Chriſt, and of the Duty of Believing, and Fear of Preſumption and believing

on my own Strength, did toſs me like a Ball; I knew not what to do, but like a weak Child ſtuck in the Birth: Oh, ſaid I, how can I believe! *Lord, help my Unbelief*, and pity me, thou that haſt been with me ſo wonderfully thro' the great and terrible Wilderneſs, and brought me even to the Borders of the good Land; Oh help here. Sometimes I would think it were better I had never come this Length: My greateſt Objection was, That I did not ſee the Glory of Chriſt; and tho' I ſhould believe, yet without this it would not be an effectual Believing, and ſo would prove but a dead Faith; and likewiſe I knew not what Faith was. Well, ſaid the Lord, do but rely on Chriſt for Life and Affection with ſome Confidence that he will help thee, and I ſeek no more. In this and to this I found ſome Strength, and then I endeavoured it, and ſaid, Behold, I come to thee, Lord; do not thou caſt me off. But the Lord ſaid, Come not only to ſee what Chriſt will do with thee, but likewiſe reſt upon and believe from his Goodneſs that he will do all that thou ſtands in Need of. Well then, anſwered my Heart, ſince it is ſo, I will take my Hazard, and on thee I caſt myſelf, come of it what will. And verily that which ſeem'd in my moſt ſerious Exerciſe to be the Notion of Faith by which I cloſed with Chriſt was, a certain kind of Perſwaſion and Reſt in it, that I had, the Lord would do me Good, and help me in all Things: And the great Thing that was preſs'd upon me was, not to doubt of Chriſt, eſpecially his Good-will; in which in ſome Meaſure I reſted.

§ 7. I was afterward more confirmed in this; for

for in this Caſe I continued for fourteen Days much after one Way, ſtill looking for ſome great Thing, but found nothing. And then a new Objection came in, which was this, Tho' it was my Duty to believe, yet, if I had really believed, there would ſomething have followed; but Oh I find nothing after my Cloſing: Surely I have laid my Pipes ſhort of the Fountain; I am as blind, as dead, as unholy as ever: I will to my Priſon again, till Chriſt himſelf come and redeem me with a ſtrong Hand; for it ſeems I have come forth without a Warrant: And ſo became diſcouraged, and did pull up the Roots and razed the Foundations again. But the Lord tryſted me with a ſuitable Word from Mr. *Shepherd* to this Objection, ſhewing that a Soul may come to Chriſt, and yet at firſt find nothing; and then, ſaith he, the ſame Reaſon (*viz.* Emptineſs) that moved thee to come, the ſame ſhould make thee ſtay with Chriſt; and 'tis uſual with the Lord's People to get nothing at firſt, *Hoſ.* vi. 1. *Let us return unto the Lord, for he will heal us.* Oh, ſay they, we got nothing, we find no Healing or Life. No, ſaith he, tho' the firſt Day ye get nothing, nor yet the next, yet *after two Days he will revive us, and the third Day we will ſtand up in his Sight.* This cured the Wound ſomething; but the freſh Apprehenſions of Preſumption and catching hold on a Lie, with the Senſe of Unworthineſs, and believing in my own Strength, did like a violent Storm raze all Foundations, ſo as thro' Pettiſhneſs, Fear, Unbelief and Impatience, I ſaid, I will to my Priſon again, I will pluck up my Anchor a-

again:

gain; and therefore reſolved I would ma
doleful and heavy Complaint to God:
when I was going to my Knees, ere ever I
ſpoken a Word to the Lord, it was ſuggeſt
me thus; Doſt thou think, ſeeing thou reje
my Son, and wilt not truſt in him, that eve
Peeping or Sorrows will be accepted by me
not every Thing that is not done in Faith
mination? Thou mayſt well think by Pray
offend God more, but never think that the
henceforth will do any Thing for thee, ſe
there is no Faith; for God hears no Prayers
in Chriſt. I ſaw by this a Neceſſity of B
ving, and doing what I could. Well, ſaid I
Lord, ſince it is ſo, that I muſt of Neceſſity
lieve, againſt Senſe and Reaſon, and as I
I do lippen my Soul to thee, and truſt thou
ſave me from all my Sins; and tho' this be c
ted Preſumption, yet I will truſt in him:
was much ſtrengthned herein from *Job* xiii.
Tho' he kill me, yet will I truſt in him; tho
Things ſeem to cry Deſpair and die, and tho
my Preſumption he ſhould kill me, yet I
truſt in him; and now, Lord, ſince I have ſe
this Bargain, and cloſed with thee, ſend Stren
not for any Thing in me, but becauſe now I
thy Servant, that I may honour thee my Ma

§ 8. I had no ſooner ſpoken theſe Wo
but the Lord revealed himſelf and his Love
the Evidence of my Sincerity in that Petit
wherein I perceived, that, laying aſide mine
Cauſe, I ſought Grace to honour him; and
this Seal of the Spirit I became aſſured with
and Peace. I am not ſelfiſh, ſaid I, in ſeek
Grace; I ſeek it for Chriſt's Ends, to hon

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him; therefore I have been ſincere, and helped to believe. Then were my Eyes opened to ſee Love in all Diſpenſations. Oh this was a Heart-raviſhing Conſideration! The Lord, that followed me many a weary Day, never reſted till he had compleated his Work with me, and till he had engaged me to believe. Oh the Love of Chriſt! If Chriſt had no Power to help a poor Sinner, but had Love, he would even die over it, ſuch is his Love.

§ 9. I was thinking whether this was but a common Work, or was it ſpecial ſaving Grace? and I am induced to believe and to think it a ſaving ſincere Faith, by theſe Grounds; 1*ſt*, It was a Faith wrought by the Lord himſelf, tho' ſmall and weak; it was a Faith of the Operation of God, *Eph.* i. 19, 20. and ii. 8. *Col.* ii. 12. It was not of my own making and deviſing; and I ſhall not think that a Preſumption which he warranted me to do, and which I did in Obedience to his Command, nor that a Deluſion which his Spirit wrought. 2*dly*, It was grounded on the Word, not on Senſe; on the Word of his Command, *Eph.* ii. 20. And 'tis no Preſumption to believe what he commands. 3*dly*, It *purified the Heart*, and made me prize and deſire Grace, and made me deſire that mainly for Chriſt's Ends, to honour him, *Eph.* i. 13. *Acts* xv. 9. 1 *John* iii. 3. 4*thly*, It filled me with *Joy and Peace*, Rom. v. 2, 3, 4. 1 *Pet.* i. 8. ſo as I was ſatisfied with my Condition, and went about the Fields ſinging Songs of Triumph over *Satan*: Oh, ſaid I, did I ever ſee this Day, or expect to ſee it? 5*thly*, I was fitted and prepared for it; for it was after much Humiliation, Burdening and Wearying, *Mat.* xi.

28. *6thly*, It ſtrengthned me; for I cried out, What ſhall I now do for the Lord, who hath heard my Sorrows and Afflictions? This *Joy of the Lord was my Strength*, Neh. viii. 10. *Prov.* xvii. 22. *7thly*, It made the Lord Jeſus precious; I was made to ſee a Glory, an Excellency and Lovelineſs in him: And 'tis a Token of a ſound Faith that exalts Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. *8thly*, I was made to reſolve to pay my Vows which I made in Afflictions and Straits once when at the College under Convictions, and another Time in Confirmation of this when in the Wilderneſs, which was this, That if the Lord would deliver me out of that Condition in which I was, and give me Aſſurance of his Love, and acquaint me in ſome Meaſure with the Ways of God and Chriſtian Exerciſes, eſpecially Faith and Patience, that thereby I might better inform others, and that before I was Twenty five Years of Age, that then, if I were in the Kingdom, I ſhould ſerve him in the Miniſtry. The Lord heard me, ſo as I thought I was bound. Then did I ſet myſelf wholly to ſerve the Lord: And in this Frame I continued for a Week, tho' not in that Extaſy of Joy, yet in that Peace and Tranquillity of Mind; my Heart, being ſtaid by Faith, was kept in perfect Peace, which, thro' my dying vaniſhing Frame of Spirit, it could never be.

§ 10. Yet notwithſtanding this Faith had many Cracks in it, and many Defects, which encouraged *Satan* to make an Aſſault, which he made thereafter. It had theſe Imperfections; 1*ſt*, Leſs diſcovered of the Power of God in making me cloſe with the Promiſe, than in diſcovering my Duty, and inclining me to believe: There

There was much of this Faith wrought by my own Power, which made *Satan* brangle it upon this very Head. 2*dly*, I ſecretly reſted, after I believed, in the Act of Faith rather than in the Object of Faith, and drew Comfort from this more than from the Object Chriſt holden out in the Goſpel. 3*dly*, I was more convinced that Believing was my Duty, than I underſtood what Believing was; the Equity of Believing appeared, but not the Rationality. I was not ſo convinced of the Grounds of Believing; and therefore was I confuſed, and utterly at a Loſs what to believe: For Generals could not be a Ground of particular Application, without which I could not have Peace. Nor had I Peace in the bare Hopes that Chriſt would ſave me, becauſe Faith and Hope appear to me to be different. 4*thly*, And the Ground of all this was, tho' the Goſpel revealed to me my Duty formally and clearly, yet not the Object of Faith, the Covenant of Grace giving Chriſt himſelf; of whom tho' I had ſome Knowledge as of One able to ſave me, and who was only my Upmaking, yet at this Time I knew him not ſo diſtinctly in his Offices and Offers, nor in the Grounds he gave of believing, till afterwards; nor was I ſo acquaint with the Nature of abſolute Promiſes, and their Reach, till afterwards. 5*thly*, I looked too much for ſomething from Chriſt's Life and Reſurrection, and did not ſo expreſly and diſtinctly (tho' I did really) cloſe for himſelf. 6*thly*, I cloſed for ſpiritual Benefits, but not for temporal Benefits. 7*thly*, I limited the holy One of *Iſrael*; for I made but Uſe of Faith for a Time, until it ſhould convey Senſe of Life and Conſolation: And this I expected immediately;

mediately, or ſhortly after I had believed; and that, when that Senſe came, there would never be a Change again, and no Uſe made of Faith, but fair Days from henceforth. I did not lay my Account to wait all the Days of my appointed Time; and therefore, not laying my Account with Trouble and long Deſertions, the Storm that thereafter blew overthrew me.

§ 11. The End of which Diſpenſation, I think, was to acquaint me more diſtinctly and clearly with the Method of Effectual Calling, which formerly I had not ſo clearly known. 2*dly*, To learn me to live the Life of Faith, and to wean me from Senſe. 3*dly*, To acquaint me with his Love, and to manifeſt and give Proof thereof to me: Which appeared clearly in this Work; for when I was not dreaming of Faith, when all that ever I heard could not clear me what it was, nor ſuſpected ſuch a Duty, and when multiplied Objections were in my Way, Oh how clearly did he looſe them! How ſtrongly, how lovingly, how inceſſantly, how patiently, how condeſcendingly to my Weakneſs, how earneſtly and ſtrongly did he draw! And, leſt I ſhould doubt that he was well pleaſed with what I had done, he ſealed it with the budding forth of Sanctification, with Joy and Aſſurance. But in nothing am I more aſſured that this was true Faith, than by the Lord's conſtant preſerving it, notwithſtanding of all Tentations; *When I was young he loved me, and led me by the Arms, teaching me to go*, Hoſ. xi. 1, 3. and in this he appeared the main Doer. 4*thly*, His End was to bring me to Reſt which is by Faith: Not to a Reſt from Labour or Work, nor a Reſt from Ten-

Tentations, Afflictions and Sorrows, and Wandrings now and then; but to a Reſt of Security and Settlement from Fears. For, till the Soul cloſe with Chriſt, it never hath any Ground of Security or Peace; then hath a Man Strength to perform Duties, a Balm againſt the Sting of Sin in the Conſcience, an undoubted Evident and Security for Heaven, an undoubted Strength to flee to in all Extremities; 'tis now not like a Wave in the Sea toſſed to and fro, but 'tis fixed and centred.

§ 12. From this I obſerve, 1*ſt*, That, ere ever a Soul can believe, he muſt be called of God; for elſe no Man would, could or ſhould come, *Rom.* viii. 30. 1 *Cor.* i. 2. *Jer.* iii. 22. 2*dly*, That the immediate End of Effectual Calling is to receive Chriſt by Faith, or to believe in and reſt on him for all Things, *John* vi. 28, 29. *Mat.* xxii. 3. *Iſa.* lv. 1. For tho' the Saints be ſaid to be called to Heaven, to Peace, to be holy; yet is not this the immediate End of Effectual Calling, but, as I ſaid, to receive Jeſus Chriſt and all Things freely offered in the Goſpel. 3*dly*, As it is God that calls, ſo it is God that maketh to anſwer this Call; and the Creature is but merely paſſive, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. 4*thly*, This Call is inward as well as outward, born in upon our Spirit; God takes a Dealing with the Heart, *Hoſ.* ii. 14. For the outward Call will never do it; *I will call her to the Wilderneſs, and ſpeak to her Heart*, Jer. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3. 5*thly*, This Call is a glorious Call, and ſtamped with Majeſty and Authority. As it is the Lord that calls, ſo doth he ſtamp his own Name on it, ſo that the Soul knows 'tis God that is dealing with him:

him: And ſo, *where the Word of a King is, there is Power*; and *who may ſay unto him, What doſt thou?* *6thly*, This Call is in the Word, or by it, *Rom.* x. 16, 17. not by dumb Enthuſiaſms, Superſtitions, or a mere Providence: It was by the Word I was convinced it was Duty to believe, the Word gave me Motives, and looſed my Objections, all my Warrants were from the Word. *7thly*, Faith is neither to love Chriſt, or to be content to take him; for that is wrought already: (to love a Perſon, and to be content to marry him, is not Marriage; 'tis but a Diſpoſition to Marriage) Nor yet to believe that he is able to ſave, or to hope; but it is to believe of Chriſt that he is yours, and will beſtow himſelf and all Things on you; and, when thus you believe, you have it: Or, it is a cordial Aſſent and particular Application of the Promiſes, giving Chriſt and all his Benefits. Give but a particular and cordial Aſſent to the Goſpel, and that is Believing; and he never heard the Goſpel, to whom it ſpoke not this. I have largely proven this elſewhere; I now give my Experience, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *8thly*, The Grounds of Faith are the Command of God, the Offer of the Goſpel, but eſpecially the Goſpel-declaration and Promiſe, which at that Time was not revealed to me, *Mat.* xi. 28. 2 *Cor.* v. 19, 20, 21. The New-Teſtament Miniſters beſeech all to be reconciled, and upon this Ground, becauſe he hath *made him Sin for us, that knew no Sin*; this is the rational Ground of believing: The Command is the moral Ground of believing, God giving Chriſt freely, and making him Sin, and our Covenant, and forgiving in his Name; and the Goſpel declaring

ring this: Hence it is more than a naked Of-
. *9thly*, Altho' it be the Duty of all to be-
ve, and tho' preparatory Qualifications give
Right to believe or to Chriſt; yet is Chriſt
ver revealed effectually to ſave a Soul, until
ſome Meaſure that Soul be made to find its
n Emptineſs and Want of Self-righteouſneſs:
is the *Blind* and *Lame* that are compelled to
ne, *Luke* xiv. 21, 23. *Mat.* xi. 28. *Jo.* ix. 39.
ov. ix. 4, 5. *10thly*, True Humiliation doth
: conſiſt in legal Terrors; and one, ſufficiently
nbled for Sin, may yet be under Apprehenſions
l Senſe of Deadneſs, *Iſa.* lxiii. 17. *Pſal.*
x. 18. Nor yet in the Continuance of Terrors;
: the Damned in Hell ſhould be moſt humbled:
ly it is rather in a Conviction of the Want of
Things, raiſing a Diſſatisfaction with the pre-
: Condition, and a Deſpair of Self, and a Juſti-
ig of God in all Matters. Yea, the trueſt
parations for Chriſt are a Senſe and Conviction
Vileneſs, and Guiltineſs, Deadneſs, Hard-
s, and Blindneſs, and a Wearieſneſs with the
old and Duties and the ill Heart. *11thly*,
e Heart truly humbled muſt be touched with
iginal Corruption and Heart-Plagues, and a
te of Diſtance and Enmity, *Jo.* xvi. 9. *12thly*,
o' all be humbled, all are not alike humbled;
tho' all Believers be drawn to Chriſt and uni-
to him, yet are not all drawn in the ſame
nner to Chriſt: To ſome Heaven as it were
pened, the Lord revealing the Glory of Jeſus
them, ſo as they without a Hinck leave all,
come flying to him, *Mat.* xiii. 44. So as the
l is ſo overpowered, that it cannot but cling
he Lord Jeſus. There are others that are un-

der deep Horrours, and brought down to Hell, and diſtracted with Terrors; and Chriſt is lovely as One that ſaves from Wrath and Hell. Neceſſity makes them flee to the City of Refuge, *Acts* ii. 37. *Heb.* vi. 18. *Pſal.* cxliii. 9. Some, under the Senſe of a dead, blind, empty Heart, flee to him for Life and Eye-ſalve more expreſly, *Prov.* ix. 4. *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19. *Hoſ.* xiv. 1. *Rev.* iii. 18. Some find they cannot come; they deſire the Lord to do it, *Lam.* v. 21. *Jer.* xxxi. 18. Some by the Senſe of a Command do deſperatly venture, and their Faith is an Act of Wilfulneſs, *Job* xiii. 15. Some come to Chriſt, and they hang (having his Promiſe, *That whoſoever comes he will in nowiſe caſt off*) by Expectation, Hope and Deſire, until a greater Window be opened in Heaven; and then they clearly receive Chriſt, when the Lord Jeſus is given, ſo as the everlaſting Doors are opened, *Pſal.* xxiv. 7, 9. Not that theſe Doors were not opened before, but becauſe the Frame of Heart was not ſo diſcovered; for a Deſire after Chriſt, and a Believing what the Goſpel ſaith, and a Hope upon this, is a real, tho' not a ſenſible, Receiving of Chriſt; only Time doth ordinarily manifeſt the Reality of this. Some cloſe with Chriſt by way of a Marriage-conſent and Contract, Chriſt overcoming the Heart by Love, *Hoſ.* ii. 19, 20. *Eph.* v. 25. *Jer.* xxxi. 33. and l. 5. Some come to Chriſt by way of looking to him; in ſome their Faith is but a Hope, or doth reſemble it. 13 *thly*, Love is the Key that opens the Heart, *Rom.* x. 10. *With the Heart Man believes to Salvation.* Hoſ. ii. 19, 20. which Love will kyth in a Mourning for want of him, and a Deſire after him;

and

and a Rejoicing in any Thing that appears like him, and a Love unto his People. And, as there is Affection in his People to him, ſo is there Love kythed in the Lord's courting of his People: The Command itſelf, *Turn*, hath Love engraven on it, the Lord's ſo earneſt ſeeking of it, his large Offers to gain this. 14*thly*, The Soul in believing cloſes with the Perſon of Chriſt (he is the principal Object, tho' not the immediate Object of Faith) and cloſes with him only and for ever; the Soul deſires this, and mourns that it is not ſo: *Take away all Sins*, Hoſ. xiv. 3. Jer. l. 5. Pſal. xc. 1. For to come to Chriſt for his Benefits only is not a perſonal Love; to come to Chriſt, but not to him only, is an adulterous Marriage; to come to him for ſometime, and not for ever, is but to give Chriſt a Viſit, not to marry him. 15*thly*, The whole Life of a Man is a continued Converſion to God, in which he is perpetually humbled under Senſe of Sin, and draws nearer and nearer to God with more fervent Faith and Love, and daily walks cloſſer and cloſſer with the Lord, endeavouring at Perfection, *Mat.* xviii. 3. *Luke* xxii. 32. *Prov.* xxiii. 26. *Cant.* iv. 8. *Pſal.* lxiv. 7. And God doth as it were act over and over again his Work in the Heart, forming his People more exactly than before: And therefore no wonder they meet with ſomething like a ſecond, yea, and a third and fourth Converſion; eſpecially where there are Backſlidings. 16*thly*, True Faith is lively and fruitful; for it ſtrengthens, ſettles and ſanctifies the Heart, 1 *Jo.* iii. 3. *Acts* xv. 9. 17*thly*, There may be Faith in the Heart, tho' it doth not manifeſt itſelf in expreſs Acts of Believing to thoſe that have

have it: Yea, there may be great Ignorance of the Nature of Faith in Speculation; as the Child lives, tho' he knows not that it is ſo, nor can tell the Conceipt of Life, *Jo.* xiv. 7, 8. compared with *v.* 16, 17. *Acts* xix. 2. 18*thly*, Wherever God begins to do Good, either to reveal or quicken, he will not leave off, but will manifeſt himſelf more and more, *Jo.* xiii. 7. *Mat.* xiii. 31. He will perfect his Work unto the End. 19*thly*, There may be a real Cloſing with Chriſt, and yet felt Deadneſs and Hardneſs. A ſick Faith is a living Faith, *Jo.* v. 40. and xi. 25. Nor is the Soul in this caſe to ſtand at a Diſtance with Chriſt. 20*thly*, The *Kingdom of Heaven*, either outward or inward, *cometh not with Obſervation*, Jo. iv. 14. and the Foundations of the Temple may be Matter of Mourning, and little Glory ſeen therein; *The Day of ſmall Things*; a great Stream may proceed from a ſmall Fountain. The Lord comes not in the Thunder nor Earthquake, but in the *ſtill Voice*. We think, like *Naaman*, that when God comes to the Heart, he will appear in viſible Glory, as ſometimes he doth; yet at other Times his Voice is not heard in the Streets, and he *groweth as a tender Plant out of the dry Ground*, and there is little Beauty ſeen in him. What a poor Beginning was all this of a Life of Faith?

CHAP. VI.

Of my Progreſs, and Growth, and Eſtabliſhment in the Ways of God.

SECT.

SECT. I.

How after closing with Christ by Faith I was assaulted with terrible Tentations, and how delivered.

I Continued in some Peace for Ten Days Time, still expecting some extraordinary Thing, but had not the Impressions of Joy I had in the Beginning so deep upon my Spirit as at first; there came a Cloud and overshadowed me thus.

§ 1. The Lord left me as to that Measure of his comforting and quickning Presence; for here in the World is not Rest, but a Place of Labour, Change, Sorrow and Pain: And therefore I behoved to draw in the Yoke. 2*dly*, I liked Ease and Rest; and now, when the Lord had broken my Bonds and Yoke, I thought there was no more for me to do, I dream'd of no Cloud or Night: And, since the Main was secured, I did not apprehend such a Necessity of Labour, but would have been at Sleeping in my Nest; or else, if I must needs Pray and Fight, I desired to be taken up in Christ's Arms as I was at first, and to be passive, and Christ to do all, *Hos.* xi. 3. *Psal.* xxx. 6. *I said*, like *Peter*, *It is good to be here*; and I said, *Let us make a Tabernacle*: Until a Cloud overshadowed me, which when it did, I expecting in vain Christ's Return in the same Manner, I got other Work to do. 3*dly*, Not finding Ease nor Peace nor Rest in God, because I would not dig for it, I behoved to have it from the World, and therefore turn'd slothful, and for sometime follow'd Vanities, seeking Rest; until (reproved) I went to Prayer, but got no Good. I took up Shep-

herd's *Sound Believer*, and there I read this Question, *How ſhall I know whether my whole Soul hath come to Chriſt?* He anſwers, "When Chriſt "alone gives ſufficient Satisfaction, ſo as there is "no Need of Idols and Luſts." For this, ah! ſaid I, I do not thus; for my Heart runs out continually after Idols. How couldſt thou think (ſaid Conſcience) that was ſo dead, to cloſe with Chriſt with the whole Soul? Have not the Effects diſcover'd thy Unſoundneſs and Hypocriſy? See to the Whoriſhneſs and Adulteries of thy Heart, and by that judge of thy Love in marrying Chriſt; Doth not thy Unſtedfaſtneſs in his Covenant prove that thy Heart was not right with God at firſt, and that thou lied unto him, when thou ſought and cloſed with him as the Rock of thy Salvation? I was made upon this to conclude that all my Lifetime I was violently carried with a Deluſion; which made the Sky very black. This Tentation was ſo violent as there was no reſiſting of it, whereby my Heart became ſorrowful, ſtrengthleſs and diſcouraged: Oh! what ſhall I, what ſhould I, nay, what can I do now? Can I beſtow more Pains than I did? Have I learned any Thing? Then did I know the Meaning of that Word, *Thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down.* To have known before, while I ſuſpected no leſs, that I was wrong, would not ſo have ſhaken me; as, after ſome Aſſurance of Favour, to be caſt down to Hell; Heart and Hand was taken away from me; I did not reaſon the Matter, but yielded eaſily and quickly: Now were my Foundations ſhaken, and a Breach made as to my Intereſt in God, and in the Grounds which the Lord had made me lay; a whole Sea fol-

followed. *4thly*, This was not enough: *Satan* was let out upon me, to trouble me with atheiſtical Thoughts, which had like Serpents been hiſſing, and had appeared, but were quieted tho' not killed; a certain Token that they would, when Occaſion offered, break out moſt violently. Oh ſaid I, what a Deluſion have I been in? I was never convinced nor humbled, nay, I think never convinced that there was a God, or that his Word was true. Now, the Lord leaving me, and *Satan* being permitted, and being with former Exerciſes naturally melancholy, atheiſtical Tentations were driven moſt violently upon me, upon which great and ſenſible Horrour fell upon my Spirit; which did ariſe, not ſo much from the Thoughts of this that there was no God, as from the Thoughts that myſelf was an Atheiſt, and that I had not a lively demonſtrative Argument for proving effectually and powerfully that there is a God. Oh miſerable Creature, cried I, that periſh'd not at firſt when under Horrour, ere I had known any Thing of God, but to live till now, till I had contracted more Guilt and Puniſhment! O happy when I thought I had ſinned the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt! For then there were Hopes that, while I believed the Scriptures, by them I might be perſwaded that I had not ſinned it; but now no Remedy is left: When the Foundations are looſed, what Means can I uſe? To whom ſhall I go, when I doubt the Being of God? How ſhall I be convinced? How ſhall I pray? *5thly*, Looking to the Diſpenſation I was under, and the Remedileſneſs of my Condition, and the Sadneſs of this Providence, my melancholy Thoughts, of which *Satan* made his Uſe, repreſented God as

terrible and fearful to me, as One who had been watching all my Lifetime to do me Evil, that had been deluding me with Frames of Spirit, and that was now manifeſting that hid Diſpleaſure againſt me which he bore me this long Time, and let me ſee he would take Vengeance of me. I thought, or apprehended, God's Wrath and Prejudice was more at my Perſon than Faults; in a Word, God was terrible and fearful to me, ſo that I was all taken out of other, and disjointed. *6thly*, This Fire did make the great Scum and Filth of Rebellion appear, and that Hatred that was in my Heart againſt God appear: My natural Corruptions were ſtirred more violently than ever, in Averſneſs to God; and ſo, *when the Law came, Sin revived, and I died.* He was fearful to me; the reading of Scripture and Prayer had no Taſte, nay, theſe Means were terrible to me, ſo as it was much that put me to Duty at all. Oh how happy then (ſaid I) when under my firſt Terrors, by what I am at this Time! While Terrors formerly were upon me, I could pray, delight in Prayer and other Means, which were exceeding ſweet unto me; but now, alas! Duties are a Burden, a Weariſomneſs and Terror unto me, and occaſionally increaſe my Trouble: For, whenever I read Scripture, a thouſand atheiſtical Thoughts were injected in my Soul; and therefore my Caſe is moſt hopeleſs. Now the Lord loves me not, and my Soul abhors him; my Heart is ſo wicked, that tho' with *Spira* I ſay it not with my Tongue, yet wiſh I that there were no God; he is ſtrange and terrible unto me, an Enemy, and therefore hateful to me. Then did I find that the carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God; I was a right Re-

pro-

preſentation of the Damned in Hell, tormented and hopleſs, and, raging againſt God and his Providences, ſometimes I would ſay, What a ſtrange Thing is this! thou thinkeſt there is no God, and yet art afraid of him. The Truth is, I did not poſitively believe that there is no God, but was afraid that I did not believe that there was one; and my Fear of God did prove a God, and my Belief of a Deity. *7thly*, It did not a little heighten my Sorrows, that I was within fourteen Days to partake of the Sacrament: The Condition I was in, and the want of the Evidences of Grace, made me look on Communicating as a dreadful Buſineſs; and the Pride of my Heart was ſuch, that having been known for a Profeſſor, and to have reſolved to communicate, it would be thought a Weakneſs not to communicate, and hazard my Eſtimation with them: And for this Cauſe I was the more diligent to get Oil, and to get my Wedding-garment on; but found not ſuch Returns as upon the like Occaſions I had hitherto found, partly thro' Sloth, and partly thro' the Pride of my Heart; ſo that I was, on the Sabbath-Day Morning that I was to communicate, in as ſad a Taking as I was ever before, utterly jumbled, and at a Diſtance with God, and full of Horrour and atheiſtical Tentations. *8thly*, 'Tis true, that for ſome Time it pleaſed God to ſuſpend theſe Storms, and to give a Calm, by binding up *Satan* for a Time; and it continued thus until three Days before my Communicating. I wondred how they could be removed, when the Cauſe was not taken away; and therefore they came again, ſo as, when I came to the Table, they aſſaulted me. Then would

would I ſay to myſelf, Oh poor wretched Soul, thou haſt oftentimes deſired a Conviction and a Law-work, and now thou haſt one to Purpoſe, and claw it off again if thou canſt; ſee what Good it doth thee: O how unkindly and diabolical are the Convictions that are now-a-days! The Occaſion and Ground of my Trouble were atheiſtical Tentations, and hard cruel Thoughts of God, which *Satan* did violently beat in upon me; as likewiſe it did afflict me, that I could not get rid of all Sin, and that I could not get reſolved to do all Duties, eſpecially the Duty of Reproof, to which I was averſe thro' my natural Baſhfulneſs. *9thly*, My Trouble was increaſed by my Communicating; eſpecially, by converſing with others, I found that the Lord that Day had been diſtributing largely; and it was ordinary with them to expreſs themſelves thus, *I have found him.* Oh, ſaid I, and am I only a Baſtard? Hath he given to every one their Allowance and Portion, and famiſhed and never ſo much as looked on me? This ſtruck me dead, and I was no longer for Company: The more ſpiritual Sermons were, and Societies were, the more was I troubled; I ſaw as it were them coming from Eaſt and Weſt, and ſitting with *Abraham, Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and myſelf among thoſe that were thruſt out: Meat, Company, and all Ordinances, were a Burden to me; I ſat alone, and mine Eyes were heavy with Sorrow. Oh (ſaid I) for ſome Wilderneſs, that I might lament in, and pour out this miſerable Soul of mine in the Lord's Boſom! My Hopes were gone, and I ſaid, Farewel all pleaſant Days again, and now henceforth I am entring the gloomy Valley and Shadow

dow of Death. No Means would do me Good: I looked over Mr. *Baxter*'s Arguments for the Truth of the Scriptures, but they ſeemed as Straw to me, and my diſtempered Spirit brake through them: My atheiſtical Reaſonings would ſhift after this Manner; What knoweſt thou but that the Apoſtles who were Chriſt's immediate Succeſſors, out of Love to him and to their Imaginations, might have gone to far-off Places and there vented their Doctrines, which thro' Proceſs of Time might have been confirmed by Proſelytes, who by the Apoſtles Life might have been drawn in; and their Followers, while there was no Printing, might have added, and, being for a long Time unquarrelled, might thro' Cuſtom have gained a Belief? In a Word, all I could ſay or hear ſeemed but weak, either to perſwade me, or to give me Peace. After the Sacrament, and after my Home-coming, my Terrors increaſt, and Tentations aſſaulted me ſo violently, as that I was taken off my Knees, and could not pray one Word; Nay, they were ſo violent, and my Fears ſo ſtrong, as that I judged they could not be removed but by a Miracle: And I would (ſaid I) ſeek no other Evidence of a Divine Power and Being, than the removing theſe Fears; and I thought, if the Lord would condeſcend to this, I ſhould doubt no more. Then was it ſuggeſted to me thus; Thy Heart was once ſo ſecure, ſo careleſs, that it needed an Almighty Power to awaken thee as now thou art; and cannot the Lord, who hath wounded thy oftentimes deemed impenetrable Heart, heal it again?

§ 2. This was my Condition; and the Lord was delivering, and did deliver me by theſe Steps

and

and Means, which did kyth the working of Grace in my Soul, and his Kindneſs. *1ſt*, I was put continually to ſeek the Lord in the Uſe of Means, notwithſtanding of all my Diſcouragements: I prayed, read and meditated; and ſome Healing I would find in theſe, but a Cloud ſtill came and overſhadowed it; however they did Good inſenſibly. One Time, being at Supper, ſome of my Relations and Strangers fell a commending a witty, carnal and perſecuting Miniſter, who was an Enemy to the Ways and People of God: I ſtarted up, and ſaid in a great Zeal, that he was not worthy to live, and that the Lord would be about with him. Here was a Well, if I could ſee it; Thou ſayeſt thou hateſt God, and how canſt thou love his People, and hate his Enemies, as thou now ſheweſt thou doſt? *He that loveth him that begat, loveth them alſo that are begotten.* But Reaſon was weak for bearing down of downright Tentations. *3dly*, Being in Mr. *T. H.* his Houſe, a godly and prudent Man, his Company did me much Good, eſpecially his Diſcourſes to me concerning the Nature of Tentations, and how the Devil beats in Tentations violently in the Soul without Reaſon, and dings them in as it were, and threaps by bold Aſſerſions on the Soul what he would have it believe: As likewiſe, his Prayers did me Good, eſpecially when he ſpake of God's Condeſcendency, and Man's Stubborneſs; and cited *Ephraim*, whom God ſmote, *and he went on frowardly in his Ways*; *I have ſeen him, and will heal him*: As likewiſe, the marvellous Light he gave to Scriptures, and manifeſted a Depth in them that I never perceived before, in the wonderful Con-

nexion

nexion of Sentences; which did aſtoniſh me, and made me ſee ſomething evidencing a Godhead even in them, a wonderful Excellency hid in them. Laſtly, his cheerful Converſation, not in a carnal Way, but I thought his Joy was inward, proceeding from Faith in God: For the univerſal Carnality of Profeſſors, with their Diſcouragements, living ſo ſhort of their Principles, did much help forward my Atheiſm, as it made me think that a Saint was but a Fancy; but truly I thought mine Eyes ſaw ſomething of a Saint and New-Teſtament Spirit in him, and was ſomeway perſwaded, by ſeeing his Holineſs, his Cheerfulneſs in God, and his deep Reach in ſpiritual Myſteries, that there was a God, and a Holineſs attainable. And ſuch was the Power of God in him, that with his ſeaſonable Diſcourſe and Prayer he would charm, and calm and quiet my Storms, even when I deſpaired of help, and thought it impoſſible; tho' they would return again when I was gone from him. Surely I received much Good by him. *4thly*, But that which gave the Dead-ſtroke to this Tentation was this; When I came from that Miniſter's Houſe, my Atheiſtical Thoughts recurred and aſſaulted me in ſuch a Manner as my Soul was vexed unto Death, that I could bide it no longer, and thro' the Violence of Tentations was taken off my Knees, and unable ſo much as to knit four Sentences together. I at laſt ſat down on my Knees, and ſaid to this Purpoſe; Lord, if thou BE, thou art Almighty, and canſt reveal ſo much of thyſelf as may convince me and put away this Storm; I deſire thee therefore to give this Proof of thy Power and Being, as this Night to put away this Storm, and con-

convince me there is a God, and that thy W
is true. Lord, be not offended with my Per
ptorineſs, for I can bear no longer; and beſi
if thou delay the Revelation of thy Mind h
in, my ſuſpicious Heart will be ready to
that it was Time that altered my Condition; :
if this very Night thou do, I will look upc
as a ſufficient Demonſtration of thy Being:
termine thou the Way thyſelf; I have opc
my Mouth. Lord, bow the Heavens, and
not by the Continuance of my Trouble ſu
Ground of Cavil to the Adverſary againſt
to make me doubt thou art the Hearer of Pra
Immediately it was ſuggeſted, Now hold by
Word, ſaid *Satan*, and thou ſhalt ſee God
not help thee this Night, and let this incr
thy Suſpicions; for ſure, if there were a God
would help when ſo put to it. But the Lord
bow the Heavens: For, ſitting penſively at
Fire-ſide, and meditating on ſome rational A
ments for clearing of the Verity of the Scriptu
and not finding any but ſuch as might be ſhift
at laſt it was ſuggeſted to me, and I was n
to fall on theſe Conſiderations; What a Fool
thou been? Art thou an Atheiſt, becauſe t
canſt not prove there is a God? Or, is ther
God, becauſe thou canſt not demonſtrati
prove it? Suppoſe it poſſible then that a Nun
of honeſt Men might lie, and that the W
were ſo mad as to believe them, and that
Lie had been carried ſo ſecretly on as neve
be diſcovered, and all Evidences to the contı
burnt when the World univerſally turned C
ſtians; tho' this were poſſible, is it therefore tr
Have ye ever ſeen an Argument to prove th

is no God, or that the Scriptures are falſe? But grant that the Scriptures are true ('tis poſſible) what Evidence could ye have of their Truth that ye have not! The Doctrine itſelf is contrary to Fleſh and Blood, againſt Lying and Juggling, confirmed by Miracles, done before the World and amidſt Enemies, for a long Time printed Copies in ſo many thouſand Hands in different Countries and Kingdoms, delivered by the moſt holy ingenuous and faithful Men, and not contradicted by Enemies: Suppoſe, I ſay, all this Courſe had been taken as the greateſt Evidence of its Truth, would there not ſtill be Place for ſuch Objections as now thou heaps? What more Evidence would you have than this? Doth it follow, becauſe ſuch Shifts may be given, that therefore the Doctrine is not true? Might not all thy Anſwers thou giveſt be given againſt it, tho' undoubtedly true? There appeared ſuch an Evidence in this Reaſoning, the Lord ſhining upon it, that by the Almighty Power of Chriſt my Clouds did fly away; the Bands in which I had been ſecretly holden ever ſince I was born, but not openly and violently kept, did in an Inſtant break aſunder, and all my Fears evaniſhed, and there was a Calm: In which God did ſhew much Goodneſs and Power and Condeſcendency, who looked ſo ſeaſonably upon me; for, if this Night had paſſed over, the greateſt Evidence imaginable, I could have gotten Matter of Objection againſt it. Some Dregs of this Trouble remained, but I was delivered out of it; and after this continued half a Year like one in a Dead-throw, had little Senſe, wreſtling with ſeveral Tentations and Difficulties. About this Time there broke out

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a great Sluice of Profanity and Perſecution; Men of Power cried down Godlineſs, Cover and Work of Reformation; godly Miniſters depoſed, and wicked ſcandalous Miniſters ſe in their Places; and none counted loyal but as could Swear and Health; and Godlineſs a Crime ſufficient. Lord, what a World was t Nothing but Drinking, Swearing, Mocking Godlineſs, and the Freedom of the Country l for ſome three Months after this my Condi was as the Dawning of the Day.

§ 3. The Ends of which Diſpenſation w *1ſt*, To give Proof to me of the Lord's Cor ſcendency and Love; which I very eminently in this. *2dly*, To convince me by a ſtrong H of my Atheiſm, and, by healing me in ſuch a lorn Condition, ſhewing an infinite Power: atheiſtical Thoughts came diverſe Times be this to my Door, but theſe unclean Spirits v out, and were not caſt out, and therefore c again; until that now, as it were in a pi Battle, they were overthrown and caſt out wit ſtrong Hand, and never after was I troubled them. *3dly*, To awaken me out of Secu and to keep me from it in Time to come, th might not reſt in Enjoyments, but, *forget what is behind*, many *preſs forwards*; to k me waking, exerciſed and buſy: I ſlept, therefore this Cry came. *4thly*, To diſcover Wickedneſs, Miſery and Weakneſs, when of God and given up to myſelf; *Wo alſo t them when I leave them.* *5thly*, To put out of Conceit with legal Terrors; for I thou they were good, and only eſteemed them ha that were under them: They came, but I fo

they did me ill; and, unleſs the Lord had guided me thus, I think I would have died doting after them. *6thly*, To mortify me to extraordinary Inlargements; for I found they never come but a Clap comes after them. That which ſo afflicted me, in this Condition, was my Ignorance, and want of ſufficient Knowledge of the Object of Believing, and too much Haſte in yielding to what *Satan* ſaid, and ſome evil Principles I had; for I thought it was ſinful in me to ſeek to ſtrengthen my Soul, or to comfort it: I did not remember former Experiences.

§ 4. From which I learn, *1ſt*, Weak Faith, or Faith in the Beginning, is never able to endure Aſſaults of Tentations; and therefore God himſelf muſt help immediately, *Mat.* viii. 25, 26. *2dly*, There may be much of God in a Diſpenſation, and much to be learned, and yet not noticed at firſt till a long Time thereafter; for it is not long ſince I ſaw the Well of Waters that was here, *Jo.* xiii. 7. *Deut.* viii. 3. *In the latter End you ſhall conſider it.* *3dly*, As the Devil ſeeks to undermine Folk in their ſtrongeſt Bulwarks, ſo muſt the Lord with a ſtrong Hand convince of, and teach fundamental Principles, and amongſt the reſt perſwade that there is a God, *Mat.* xvi. 17. 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. Natural Belief and Evidence muſt vaniſh in Supernaturals. *4thly*, No natural or rational Evidence is ſufficient to convince of Atheiſm; for all that either I could meditate or read in Books, could not do my Turn, nor cure my Atheiſm, *Mat.* xvi. 17. *Fleſh and Blood hath not revealed this.* *Peace* is a *created* Thing of God, *Iſa.* lvii. 19. *5thly*, Fears ariſing, in Saints, from Tentations of Atheiſm, do

proceed from this Ground, becauſe they ſuſpect they are Atheiſts; rather than from this, that they indeed believe there is no God: For I feared I ſhould be damned for my Atheiſm. *6thly*, Chriſt outſhoots *Satan* in his own Bow: The Devil ſought by theſe Tentations to ſhake me looſe of all my Principles, and make me deſpair; and God bleſt it to be the Mean of my eſtabliſhing, *Gen.* l. 20. *Pſal.* cxix. 71. The Lord pitied me when he ſaw the Devil's Violence; and, whatever the Beginnings of Trouble be, yet the End is Peace and Good. *7thly*, There is no Caſe imaginable deſperate, in which a Man is to give over his Hope: For here was as hopeleſs a Caſe as ever any was in, there being no Means to help, no Grace in me, but Stubbornes, and wreſtling with God, none able to help me, all given over, the Foundation ſhaken; and yet out of this I was helped. *8thly*, Ere the Devil be dung out of any principal Fort, there is ordinarily a great Storm raiſed; he is not dung out without Noiſe: And principal ſubſtantial Truths are not cheap bought. *9thly*, An Evil under which the Soul mourns, is burdened, and which it lothes, will never deſtroy a Man; 'tis Ills entertained that deſtroy the Soul. *10thly*, God ever helps, and never until Extremity, *Deut.* xxxii. 36. *Iſa.* xli. 17. when the Spirit begins to fail. *11thly*, While we are here, we muſt reſolve to meet with one Evil after another to grapple with: Here is not the Land of Reſt or Peace; *In the World ye ſhall have Tribulation*; either inward or outward, or both, *Jo.* xvi. ult. I had no ſooner come out of the Wilderneſs, and was thinking to *multiply my Days as the Sand*;

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in Peace, but this Storm came: *This is not your Reſt; there remaineth a Reſt for the People of God.* 12thly, As there are Troubles, ſo are there Deliverances out of Troubles; *Many are the Troubles of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.* No Trouble is a Saint's Dead-ill, 'tis not unto Death, *Pſal.* xxxiv. 19. But *Evil ſhall ſlay the Wicked*, v. 21. 13*thly*, God afflicts in Meaſure, he puts no more Weight upon the Soul than 'tis able to bear: I had little or no outward Afflictions to grapple with; now, the Lord *ſtayed his eaſt Wind in the Day of his rough Wind*, Iſa. xxvii. 8. the Foundations of the great Deep, which afterwards broke out, were not yet opened. 14*thly*, Violent Tentations laſt not long; when the Devil turns violent, his beſt Arrows are done: *Nil vehemens durabile.* 15*thly*, A Saint's firſt Exerciſes are ordinarily in Spirituals, ere he be ſet to conflict with outward Troubles, that he be not turned carnal by them, but, being ſomewhat acquainted with the Lord's Ways, may be more ſpiritual in his outward Exerciſes: The Lord trains him up privately, as it were, ere he ſet him out to fight. 16*thly*, As 'tis ordinary with young Beginners to refuſe to be comforted, and to join with *Satan*; ſo do they ordinarily fail herein, and refuſe to be comforted, thinking it ſinful: I might had many Things to comfort me, had I heeded; and 'tis the worſt they can do. 17*thly*, Altho' God ſaves ordinarily by Means, yet it is not any Vertue that's in the Means that helps, but it is the Lord concurring with this or that Mean. Altho' I grant an Aptitude or Rationality in the Means, yet, by Reaſon of the Reſiſtance in the Subject, they are in-

ineffectual: It was a rational Conſideration ſaved me, but I had rejected many greater Evidences; and I found, beſides the Rationality of the Object, ſome other Thing concurring, working phyſically, *Mat.* iv. 4. *Hoſ.* i. 7. *Deut.* viii. 3. *That thou mightſt know Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* So that, 18*thly*, I found not only a moral Suaſion on the Underſtanding and Will, but even, beſides, ſome phyſical ſenſible Touch of God's Hand on the Will, determining me and bowing me to aſſent, taking away the Reſiſtance. 19*thly*, Pride and Stubborneſs is the Sting and Life of Evils; and by Submiſſion the Gall and Venom and Fire of them is taken away: This faſtens our Bonds on us, *Jam.* iv. 6. *God reſiſts the Proud.* For I ſaid, I would be content of Terrors, but not to proceed from this Ground of Atheiſm, but from God, to ſhew me the Evil of a natural Condition. When the Lord would remove his Hand, I would be diſcontent; Now, ſaid I, the Lord is gone, and hath not done his Work, and I am as graceleſs as ever. 20*thly*, Seldom do Mercies Good when there is over much Peremptorineſs in aſking them: More Submiſſion would have made my Deliverance much ſweeter, and Thankfulneſs and Contentment with little Mercies would bring in much again, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 29. Another Storm behoved to humble me, and came a good while after, and did that which this did not; only the Lord condeſcended to my Importunity. 21*ſtly*, Extraordinary Enjoyments are not to be anxiouſly deſired, for they have *the Day of Adverſity* ſet againſt them, *Eccl.* vii. 14. *God hath*

hath ſet the one againſt the other. 22*dly*, Grace will ſome Way appear in a Man's loweſt Condition, tho' it be very weak. For I found ſomething of Submiſſion from that Word, *Micah* vii. 9. Love likewiſe appeared, and my Heart ſaid, *Tho' he kill me, yet will I truſt in him.* 23*dly*, God will deliver his People ſometimes, tho' they be not very fitted for a Deliverance; and, tho' there be no Preparation for Him, He will come: For I may ſay, except Prayer, which my Extremity put me to, there was no Grace exerciſed; Sin was not made bitter to me, there was no Humiliation, no Patience, no Faith, no Inſtruction learned, but roaring like a Bull in the Net, and crying like the Raven; and yet the Lord heard that Voice, and delivered me, tho' in his Juſtice the Deliverance was not ſo ſweet, as I obſerved before. 24*thly*, My Doubts of the Being of a God did ariſe more thro' Want of a demonſtrative Argument to prove it poſitively, than from any Argument to prove directly there was no God; for the Devil never offered to prove that there was no God, but put it on me to prove, and anſwered my Arguments and Objections, which was hard to do; and, becauſe I could not prove it effectually, I would conclude that therefore there was no God.

SECT. II.

Of a ſpiritual Decay, and ſome Afflictions I was tryſted with for the Space of two Years.

MY Pride, and Haſtineſs to be delivered out of my laſt ſad Exerciſe, was one

Reaſon, I think, that I received no more Profit than I did by it: Our Deſires are not always beſt for us; the Deſires of the Heart, and Soul-leanneſs, go together, *Pſa.* cvi. 15. I was but a Novice in believing, and ſo not kept in perfect Peace.

§ 1. I was then to go South, being in the Year 1661, where I ſtayed from *November* I think till *October* thereafter, being to pay ſome Money to a Creditor, and to tranſact with ſome Debitors, being at this Time twenty one Years of Age; as likewiſe ſome Buſineſs did intervein there, which took me up. It was now that I began ſome way to mind Buſineſs; I ſhould have gone to the College, but I was otherwiſe taken up: In a Word, except it was to ſpend my Time, I knew no Good I did all that Time; only I wrote ſome Law. I came Home at laſt, and was a little more taken up in Duty when at home then when afield, but made no ſenſible Progreſs, but was as it were in the Dead-throw.

§ 2. About this Time my outward Afflictions began to appear, and the Lord was bringing me low as to my Condition in the World, by means of a Perſon who pretended Right to all we had in the World, and had ſome Colour of Law for it, our Securities not being well buckled; and beſides, he was an active Man. He called me South, being cited for that Effect; where being come, and deſtitute of Friends and Money, the Times being evil, and there being much Corruption in Courts, and my Adverſary being in great Favour, and I unwilling to go to, and unſkilful in Law, and withal being conſcious to the Weakneſs of my own Securities, I was forced

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and inclined to agree with him on what Terms it pleaſed himſelf, giving him much of 12000 Merks, which was a conſiderable Part of my Intereſt; which to the ignorant and unacquainted with my Affairs (as all were beſide myſelf) did expoſe me to much Diſreſpect and Contempt, which I was forced with Patience to bear, and did make me to ſail with a low Sail. About the ſame Time likewiſe I unadviſedly bound for the Sum of 8000 Merks of Proviſions to my Siſters, they being to be married, and my Mother life-renting all my Eſtate, which was not now above 100 *L. Sterling per annum*; which Sums do daily run on Intereſt, and conſume my Stock: And much of this I looked on as a Puniſhment of my Faults.

§ 3. I lived and continued in theſe Sins, which about this Time did mightily prevail againſt me; (1.) I omitted the excellent and precious Occaſions of getting and doing Good, both in reference to myſelf and others, in Spirituals and Temporals, where I had Occaſions of Sermons, of Fellowſhip of Saints, of Books, of expeding Buſineſs, and otherwiſe accompliſhing myſelf, *Mat.* xxii. 3. *Heb.* x. 25. *Iſa.* lxv. 2. *Hoſ.* viii. 12. Time was miſerably miſpent. (2.) There was much Omiſſion of private Duties, of Prayer, Meditation, and Reading of the Scriptures; and theſe were either omitted, or very ſlightly performed. (3.) I lived in ſpiritual Adulteries, and gave myſelf to Idols, to Senſuality of Meats, Drinks, Company, Paſtime, Cards and Dice; and, having *forſaken God the Fountain of living Waters, I hewed out to myſelf broken Ciſterns that can hold no Water*: And in this Life of

Pleaſures I continued, notwithſtanding of many Challenges of Conſcience. (4.) I through this decayed in Grace, loſt my Aſſurance, Peace and Strength, and became very unhearty and indiſpoſed. (5.) Playing exceſſively at the unlawful Game of Cards, ſpending much of the Day and Night therein, and in reading of Romances, notwithſtanding of Challenges. (6.) There was extraordinary Lightneſs in my Converſation, eſpecially with Profeſſors, when the ſad Times called for Mourning. The Work of Reformation was at this Time ruined; the eminent Servants of Chriſt, ſome killed, ſome baniſhed, their Livelyhood taken from them, and all generally diſcountenanced; Wickedneſs advanced, and Godlineſs born down; faithful Miniſters caſt from their Charges, and Hirelings introduced, becauſe they would not ſubmit to the accurſed Prelacy; and yet was I making Mirth when mine Eyes were Witneſſes to all this. My outward Tentations to this were abundant Divertiſements, carnal Company, and a Spirit of Sloth.

§ 4. Yet notwithſtanding ſome Life continued ſtill, and the burning Buſh was not conſumed. The Means that did me Good were, 1. I would pray once a Day, at leaſt in the Morning; and this kept me from putrifying altogether. 2. Writing ſome Practical Divinity did me Good, and put me likewiſe in a Frame. 3. On the Sabbath-day I would take ſome more Time, and the Lord would ordinarily meet me with ſome Life and Affections; and then I would ſee the Evil of my Ways, and return. 4. Extraordinary Times for Meditation I would take; and, when Sin and Diſtance would come

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to ſome Height, I would retire and pour out my Soul to God, and by this Means get Good, and I would put on new Reſolutions. 5. Afflictions now begun likewiſe to work, and theſe kept my Eyes waking, and would make an Impreſſion upon my Spirit, and put me out to Prayer, and would make Mercies, whether ſpiritual or temporal, ſweet to me. 6. Some ſeaſonable Words I would hear ſometimes in good Books or Sermons or Diſcourſes, which did keep my Bones green as it were, and would keep in my dying Life; and thro' this it came to paſs, that tho' I was much endangered by Tentations, yet not altogether deſtroy'd.

§ 5. God's End in this, for any Thing I yet underſtand, was to let me ſee the Evil of the Good of the World: For now, having Health, Peace, Liberty, Company, Divertiſements and Money, I became carnal, that ſo I might ſee the Evils of the World to be better than the Good thereof. 2*dly*, That the Remembrance of this miſpent Time might humble me afterwards, that in the Senſe of this I might walk ſoftly and in Bitterneſs, *Hoſ.* ix. 1. *Iſa.* xxxviii. 15. 3*dly*, That thereby I might be the better aſſured of the Lord's Everlaſting Love, who now, when afreſh provoked, did not forſake me, but after all this returns: As, 1*mo*, What a Mercy, that I was not taken away in my Sins! If God ſhould then have ſummoned me, how unprepared had I been, and what a Terror would Death then have been unto me? *Ezek.* xx. 8. 2*do*, In keeping in the dying and conſuming Life, that I fell not back altogether, and ſlept not the *Sleep of Death*, Exod. iii. 2. 3*tio*, In his Pains and Viſitations, whereby,

by my Spirit was upholden: Oh how did he warn me! how did he preſerve my Soul from falling, and dried mine Eyes from Tears! One Time, deſpairing almoſt of doing any Good, I was recovered and ſtrengthned by that Word, *Deut.* viii. 15, 16. *I led thee through a great and terrible Wilderneſs, that I might do thee Good in the latter End.* Another Time a graceleſs Miniſter, of whom I expected nothing, did revive my Spirit againſt the Fears of Wants in the World, in a Sermon on theſe Words, *Fear not, the Hairs of your Head are all numbred*; and ſpake moſt pertinently to the Caſe. 4*to*, At laſt He delivered me. And will not this God, that hath accompanied me ſo far, carry me to the End?

§ 6. From which I obſerve, 1*ſt*, The great Wickedneſs and Power of Sin that is in every Man's Heart, that, notwithſtanding of all Means, will ſtill be breaking out again and again. O how great Need of great Watchfulneſs is there, and ſpiritual Dependence on God! 2*dly*, God's own People, to whom he ſhews Kindneſs, are not exempted from the greateſt of Evils, ſuch as Sins, Tentations, Deſertions, Decays and Afflictions; which ſhould make us walk in Fear and Trembling, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 26. 3*dly*, All the Lord's Ways are Mercy and Truth to them that fear him; he brings Good out of all Evils; where Sin abounds, Grace ſuperabounds. I truſt this ſhall do me Good, and make me *love much, becauſe much is forgiven*, Pſal. xxv. 10. 4*thly* Proſperity, Eaſe, and the Deſires of the Soul, ſend Leanneſs to the Soul; the Evils of the World are much better than the Good thereof,

Prov.

Prov. i. 32. 'Tis ſtill better with me when I have leaſt outward Comforts. *5thly*, Whatever God ſuffers in others for a Time, or whatever their own Thoughts may be, yet will not God ſuffer Sin unpuniſhed or uncorrected in Profeſſors, *Amos* iii. 2. Tho' God be merciful, gracious and long-ſuffering, yet *by no Means will he clear the Guilty*. Juſtice and Mercy kiſs one another; for about this ſame Time my outward Afflictions did begin, and the Seeds of my future Afflictions were ſown. *6thly*, All Means to recover out of a backſlidden Condition will be in vain, tho' they keep Life, until the Lord Jeſus his Hour come, *In vain ſhalt thou uſe many Medicines*, Jer. ii. 20, 22. *7thly*, Prayer and Meditation, tho' not always effectual for the End intended, yet are evermore profitable; for tho' they did not altogether recover me, yet this I find, they did preſerve me from utter falling: And ſo by Experience I know the Truth of this, *He hath not ſaid to the Houſe of* Jacob, *ſeek his Face in vain*; a great Encouragement to Duty, *Heb.* xi. 6. *Job* xxi. 15. For, ever ſince I remember, proportionable to my Diligence in ſeeking was my finding; nor made I ever any extraordinary Mint to ſeek God, but I found ſomething extraordinary, *8thly*, 'Tis a concluded and reſolved Thing, which will univerſally hold true of all the People of God, That they ſhall not only have inward Troubles, but likewiſe outward Troubles in and from the World, and find it (they muſt) *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*; that their Affections may be weaned therefrom, and they made to ſeek another Reſt, and their Graces may be exerciſed, *Jo.* xvi. *ult.* *9thly*, The haſty concluding we have

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no Intereſt in God, as it comes and is increas'd by Security, ſo it is the Ground of Apoſtaſy, and produces much Evil. 1*mo*, It offends God, by rubbing a Lie on him, and calling the Work of his Spirit a natural Work or worſe. 2*do*, Unthankfulneſs for ſo great a Work, the Soul denying it. 3*tio*, No Love to God, as conceiving him yet a Stranger. 4*to*, No Satisfaction, Pleaſure or Delight in the Lord or his Ways, becauſe no Intereſt in them. 5*to*, And, there being no Reſt in God, there is a Neceſſity of ſeeking it elſewhere in the Creature. 6*to*, The Hands weakned in ſeeking of God, ſince former Pains are ineffectual: What can I do, that I have not done already? ſaith the Soul. 7*mo*, Hard Thoughts of God as of an Enemy and Evil-wiſher to poor Sinners, rather than as One willing to ſave them, and that is their Friend; ſeeing no Means can prevail with him. But, 10*thly*, and *laſtly*, I learn a Chriſtian's Aſſurance or Faith, tho' it do not firſtly flow from Holineſs, yet is ever proportionable to his holy Walking. Faith is kept in a pure Conſcience; Sin is like a Blot of Ink fallen upon our Evidences. This I found as a Truth, and ſo will any not given up to the Deluſion of *Antinomianiſm*.

SECT. III.

Of my Recovery by Faith.

BEING thus kept for a while in Bonds, and not able to recover, I came Home, and the Lord looked upon me thus.

§ 1. Being come Home, and exceedingly afflicted with the Remembrance of miſpent Time, and

and the Cloud that was upon me breaking out in outward Troubles, being then in my Siſter's, I reſolved, ſeeing my Caſe was extraordinary and therefore required an extraordinary Remedy, and that Faſting and ſetting ſome reaſonable Time apart had been ſo bleſt to me, I would try what the Lord would now do to me by it. The Cauſes were my Unſettledneſs and low Condition. At that Time I gave up myſelf to God, to be directed by him; and he led me by an unexpected Way, which was, by convincing me of my Unbelief, and humbling me under it, and drawing me by renewed Acts of Faith to himſelf again. The Lord made the Strain of my Diſcourſe to run out on Faith, and Unbelief, which laſt I conſidered as the greateſt of Evils. The Conſiderations that then had Influence upon me were, *1ſt*, Unbelief was the only and great Sin of the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, for which the Lord was ſo angry, that he *conſumed their Days in Vanity*, Pſal. lxxviii. 32, 33. becauſe they did not truſt in him, nor believed him for all his Wonders. *2dly*, Unbelief reflects on God, and ſays as much as, He is a Liar, 1 *Jo.* v. 10. An Opinion of God's Infidelity and Treachery is the Foundation of Unbelief, as his Truth is the Ground of Faith. *3dly*, Unbelief is the Mother and Womb of all the Departings and Apoſtaſies of the Soul from God, *Heb.* iii. 12. Unbelief is the Captain that ſtrikes the firſt Stroke, and leads all the Armies of ſpiritual Evils againſt us; our Faith is the firſt Thing that fails in us. *4thly*, Unbelief is more hainous than the Sin of *Sodom*, *Matth.* xi. 24. more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* than for unbelieving *Capernaum*. *5thly*, Unbelievers are a-

amongſt the firſt and chief that ſhall be ſent to the bottomleſs Pit, *Rev.* xxi. 8. *The Fearful and Unbelievers*, &c. *6thly*, The Holy Ghoſt, when he comes to convince of Sin, convinces of this moſt, *Jo.* xvi. 9. *When he comes, he will convince of Unbelief*; as tho' there were no Sin but this, or in Compariſon of this. *7thly*, Unbelief is a Sin againſt Love and Kindneſs, and the refuſing of the Offers of Love; and this wounds the Lord moſt. Any Thing but Unkindneſs, *Acts* xiii. 41. therefore, *Ye Deſpiſers, wonder and periſh.* *8thly*, Unbelief is a Sin againſt the Perſon of Chriſt; *They would have none of me.* *9thly*, Unbelief is a Sin that makes the Lord loſe much Pains and Travail. If a Phyſician would have gone to a far Country, and with great Pains have brought a precious Potion that only could heal his Patient's Diſeaſe; if now the Patient after all this Work ſhould ſpill it, or break the Veſſel in which it were, would not this go very far to the Phyſician's Heart? So it is here; the Lord Jeſus hath come from the Boſom of the Father, taught ſo much, ſuffered ſo much, waited ſo long on thee, ſuffered ſo much of thee, humbled thee, taken all the Pains imaginable on thee, and all to make thee believe, and which is only able to do thee Good; and wilt thou after all this refuſe the Potion? *10thly*, Unbelief is a dangerous and ſtrong Evil, that walks up and down the Soul under the Notion of Humility, and can be hardly gotten away. With theſe Conſiderations which God did preſs home on my Soul, thro' his Goodneſs and Power, I was wrought on ſo powerfully and ſweetly to believe the Sinfulneſs of Unbelief, and Evil thereof; and

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the Lord commended Faith ſo to me, that I found I was drawn to Chriſt by an irreſiſtible yet ſuitable Power, and yet ſo ſtrongly, that I could not misbelieve, and was made to reſolve and promiſe never more to misbelieve. I was paſſive, and found a Divine Power in it. (2.) From this there proceeded a new Heart, Reſolution and Strength. (3.) All Sorrows and Fears were removed, and I was much comforted, quieted and ſtrengthned. (4.) Strengthned to ſeek the Lord and his Ways. (5.) Sin in general mortified, and a particular Sin, *viz.* playing at Cards, quite felled, with which I had ſo long wreſtled in vain, and to which I had ſo great an Inclination that I continued in it againſt Checks of Conſcience: That Sin, I ſay, this Day received its Death's Wound; ſo as I put on a thorow Reſolution never to uſe any of theſe Games and Lottery, and this ſo effectually, that from that Day to this Day I never had ſo much as an Inclination to it, which before I could hardly forbear; which gave me great Peace afterwards.

§ 2. Nor were the immediate Effects of this, while at Home, leſs bleſſed: For, (1.) I found a greater Wiſdom, Strength and Activity to go about civil Buſineſs, which I could maſter now. (2.) I had ſome Experience of the Lord's Kindneſs in ſome Afflictions and Trials I met with at the ſame Time, in ſupporting my Spirit under them, and delivering my Soul out of them wonderfully by his own immediate Power; which if God had not done, any of them might do much to break me: Theſe did not in the leaſt diſmay me. (3.) I found Afflictions doing me Good; and the Rod was giving me Inſtruction, and putting

ting me to Prayer, in an extraordinary Manner: My Heart likewiſe was mortify'd to the World, and God was made ſweet to me as my Portion. (4.) I got ſome Knowledge in the Covenant of Grace, the Grounds of Believing, the Advantages thereof, and Motives to it: With this my Spirit was moſt exerciſed; and, being called to another Country, I expreſt much Cheerfulneſs in my Life and ſpiritual Strength in the Lord, crying out againſt Diſcouragements and Unbelief, and preſſing Faith, and ſhewing the Grounds thereof: For I found the Profeſſors thereof to be altogether diſcouraged with Unbelief and a Spirit of Bondage; for Application of Promiſes was counted Preſumption, and I cannot deny but I was ſomeway uſeful to ſome of them. And their great Unbelief and ſlaviſh Spirit did make me think that ere long they would fall, tho' they were eminent; and ſo it fell out. (5.) I began again to write Diaries, and to walk more cloſly and circumſpectly with God. (6.) Being very dead afterwards, I went under great Indiſpoſition to Prayer at Night; and I, thro' the Lord's Providence, was put to meditate on the Lord's Way of doing me Good, and the Communion I had with him at my firſt Acquaintance: The Lord ſo bleſſed theſe Thoughts, that they ſtrangely revived and ſtirred me up to a more vigorous following of God, which continued and increaſt for much of a Quarter of a Year, in which Time I was fully growing. (7.) The Lord did put me now to meditate on more ſubſtantial Truths than formerly, *viz.* the Evil of Sin, God's Attributes, Death, Hell and Heaven; of Indiſpoſitions, which did me much Good. (8.) The Buds

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of true Sincerity, and Purity of Ends and Actions, were now appearing; and I then began firſt to think, that poſſibly I was converted. (9.) The Scriptures were exceeding ſweet to me, and I began to ſee and feel more Light and Power and Wiſdom in them than ever before, eſpecially the Epiſtle to the *Romans*; which did much ſtabliſh me in Believing. Gifts increas'd, ſo was the outward Converſation reformed. (10.) Several practical and ſpeculative Diſcourſes which I did write, eſpecially on Afflictions, did me Good: Solitude, Prayer, doing Good to others, and Strictneſs in Walking, did me much Good; ſo did my Meditations on Sin, on the Attributes of God, on Afflictions likewiſe.

§ 3. Altho' there was Enmity ſet between me and my Luſts, yet not being throughly mortified, and they getting Leave, did make me unſtable in my Ways; ſo that, like the Sluggard, *I roſted not what I took in Hunting*: And beginning to ſucceed in ſome Affairs, and carrying Buſineſs, and growing in ſome Eſtimation with others, my Heart not well balanced was lifted up, and I was projecting great Things to myſelf, and dealing imperiouſly with ſome under my Power. Likewiſe ſome of my carnal Relations at the ſame Time, being Men of Account, coming out of the South, and having ado with them, I but too much ſought to humour them, and to comply with their Faſhions and ſinful Cuſtoms of Healthing, which did much untune me and wear away ſome of the former Impreſſions.

§ 4. From all which I obſerve and learn theſe Things; 1*ſt*, That Faith is the Life of a Chriſtian, and the main Grace, *Iſa.* lv. 3. *Hab.* ii. 4. *Rom.*

Rom. i. 17. *Heb.* x. 38. *Gal.* ii. 20. *2dly*, That Faith is wrought by the Power of God, in which the Soul is paſſive, tho' Faith itſelf be an Act of the Soul; for I was overpowered in Believing, and drawn to God. *3dly*, That Faith hath a great Influence on Sanctification; ſo that one main Reaſon of ſo little Power againſt Sin, ſo little Holineſs in Life and Converſation, is the Want of the Exerciſe of Faith, and thro' a Spirit of Bondage, 1 *Pet.* i. 5. *Mark* ix. 19, 23. *Heb.* xi. 33. By Faith Righteouſneſs is wrought, and all Apoſtaſy proceeds from a Decay of Faith. *4thly*, Where Chriſt hath begun a good Work, he will continue ſtill to perfect it, *Phil.* i. 6. *5thly*, Faith and every other Grace is at firſt but very imperfect, *Mat.* xiii. 31. like *a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed.* *6thly*, God doth not always deliver in that Way and Manner that is thought or deſigned by the poor Soul itſelf, but in an unexpected and oftentimes contrary Way: For I deſigned a Faſt to ſee if the Lord would break in with Terror upon my Soul, and that was the Way by which I thought to return out of my Backſliding; and, behold, the Lord helped, by preſſing and helping to believe, 2 *Kings* v. 11. *Prov.* iii. 5. *Iſa.* lv. 8. *7thly*, Faith is the firſt Grace in Exerciſe, prior in Time to any other, *Jo.* vi. 29. *Jer.* xxxi. 19. *After I was turned I ſmote upon my Thigh.* And he that would do any Thing, let him fix his Faith firſt; for *whatever is not* done *in Faith is Sin.* *8thly*, As Faith and other Graces have their Flowings, ſo have they and will have their Ebbings; they have their Winters and Summers; none muſt expect conſtant and uninterrupted Growth; they have their Witherings, that

that Dependence and freſh Application may be made to Chriſt and that Chriſt for a renewed Life may put a renewed Obligation on the Soul, *Iſa.* xxxiii. 24. *Pſal.* cii. 26. 1 *Pet.* i. 25. Let none expect conſtant Health. 'Tis ſaid of the Heavens, *Thou ſhalt change them, and they ſhall be changed.* 9thly, Days and Times ſet apart extraordinarily, on ſome extraordinary Occaſions, are exceeding uſeful and profitable (if not needful) to the Preſervation of a Chriſtian Life; nor know I how Folks can be Chriſtians without it. There were occaſional Sacrifices as well as the daily Burnt-offering, and Days and Times extraordinarily for extraordinary Occaſions: 'Tis true, they are not ſtinted now under the Goſpel, nor holy by Precept as they were; but there is this Moral in them, that yet obliges, That extraordinary Mercies or Troubles ſhould have proportional extraordinary Worſhip and Addreſs to God. For my own Part, I cannot expreſs how needful, yea, how profitable and neceſſary theſe Days have been; what others may do, I know not: And I look on the Neglect of extraordinary Addreſs to God, as one main Cauſe why there are ſo many decayed, and are but High-way Chriſtians.

SECT. IV.

Of ſome after Troubles and Decays that befel me, and Recoveries thereout, 1663.

1. BEing delivered now from all my Fears, and my Day clearing as to my ſpiritual Condition, and better Hopes of temporal Affairs, I was anew plunged in a Sea of

of Troubles, when I did ſcarce dream of it: For falling out with ſome of my Relations unadviſedly, and egged on by others, anent ſome civil Matters; I purſued them at Law, and ſpent more on it than the Matter was worth, and that merely on the Account of my Credit and Reputation: Where there wanted not Diligence and Succeſs as to my Part, but God put viſible Hinderances in the Way, and I was led merely by my Inclinations, and did not adviſe with the Lord. 2*dly*, At firſt, thro' want of Occaſions to pray, and manifold Tentations, and want of good Company, and much diſtracted with what I intended, and quartering in a Change-houſe, I fell in ſome conſiderable Decay, and began to be remiſs in my Progreſs, and to grow dead and dull, and untender, and the Lord's Communications did dry up upon my Soul; and now I began to forget former Things: And this continued *July* and *Auguſt*. 3*dly*, I changed my Quarters in Town, being unſatisfied with my former, and the Inconvenience thereof; and took up my Chamber in a godly Man's Houſe, an outed Miniſter, where, thro' his godly Converſation, and ſome more Pains taken in Duties, and his godly ſpiritual Sermons on the Sabbath-day, and my withdrawing from hearing Curates, but eſpecially thro' the Lord's pouring out of his Spirit, and drawing near to my Soul, I began again to recover; and in Proceſs of Time not only recovered what I loſt, but much more: The unregarded Vineyard was now look'd to again, and Communion with God ſet on Foot, and my Taſte of ſpiritual Truths returned again. Here I ſtayed till the Middle of *October*. 4*thly*, One Sab-

bath-

bath-day eſpecially, when alone, and at firſt perceiving nothing, and under great Deadneſs, and upon the Point of giving over, the Lord was pleaſed unexpectedly to draw near, and to concur ſo with my Exerciſes, as that thro' the Light of his Spirit I was made to ſee much of my good Eſtate, and to behold the Work of God in my Soul; to diſcover the many Miſtakes I had, that before kept me in Darkneſs and Bondage; thro' which I was ſo enlightned and ſtrengthned that it was as a Recovery of Health after Sickneſs, and like the Sun getting out from under the Cloud; in the Strength of which I went afterwards, and by this Day's Exerciſe did much advance in my Journey: And the Truths of the Lord, then taught me, were of ſpecial Uſe ever afterwards to me. *5thly*, I here likewiſe got ſome extraordinary Viſits from the Lord both in Prayer and other Exerciſes, eſpecially in reading of the Scriptures: But it was preſt on my Spirit, and I was follow'd with it, *That Bonds and Afflictions were abiding me*; which accordingly fell out. *6thly*, I ſucceeded as to my Buſineſs for which I came South, having got the Law with much Pains and Expences againſt theſe who did compete with me, they not ſtriving much againſt it, but going another Way to Work. *7thly*, Here likewiſe, taking but too great a Liberty to converſe with Quakers, I was, thro' ſome of their Inſinuations and reading of their Books, tempted to join with them; and a great Stir upon my Spirit: But going to pray to God, and recommending my ſtaggering Spirit to him, the Lord made ſuch a Light to ſhine in my Soul from his Word, that did let me ſee the utter Evil of their

Way, and how croſs it was to God's Will, the Danger and Inconſiſtency of it with Salvation, ſo as I was made to look on them as the greateſt Enemies to Chriſt of any he had, and the Effects of the Wrath of God to puniſh ſuch as had not received the Truth in Love. This was a Week's Exerciſe to me: The Means were Prayer, Submiſſion, ſeaſonably ſuggeſted Scriptures, and ſome Meditation on their Way; but that which did moſt alienate me from them, was, I ſaw them more zealous for ſpreading their Opinion, than drawing to Chriſt; I ſaw or heard little of his Praiſes in their Mouths; the End of their Converſation was not Chriſt. *2dly*, I thought on the main controverted Principles, and clearly ſaw them of the Devil: I looked on the inward Teſtimony and Guiding of the Spirit (as they ſay) in the Heart, but as a Device of *Satan* to caſt off the Scriptures, that he deluding their Spirits, and they giving Way to their own corrupt Imaginations, might cloſe with any Evil he ſhould ſuggeſt; and beſides, I ſaw it flat contrary to the Scriptures, by which Chriſt was led, and which were given that we might believe and learn to fear God. *3dly*, They denied the Sovereignty of God, in maintaining Free-will, and all in Man's Power; which I ſaw manifeſtly croſs to the Scriptures. *4thly*, I ſaw clearly that they walked in a Covenant of Works: For their Way of Juſtification and Happineſs was only taking heed to the Light within, and obeying it, and by ſo doing to come to Eternal Life; and this I could never digeſt. *5thly*, I looked on their caſting aſide a ſtanding Miniſtry and Ordinances and not praying but when the Spirit moveth,

ſo many helliſh Inventions of *Satan*, and great preſumptuous Arrogancy, and the Effects of a ſlothful Spirit; and the Deſign of all to draw from the Simplicity of the Goſpel. *6thly*, I ſaw they walked by Senſe and Feeling, and not by Faith. *7thly*, I ſaw and conſidered that theſe that they made their Prey were ordinarily but only old jaded Profeſſors, that never found the conſtant ſatisfying Sweetneſs of their own Religion, and in Time wearying of it, and not able to reſiſt the ſtrong Tentations of ſpiritual Enemies, and in a Word wanting Reſt in Chriſt becauſe never truly united to him, have in Time withered, and, like the unclean Spirit, ſeeking Reſt and finding none, have here at laſt ſtumbled: Nor have I ever been ſtumbled at any who fell that Way, being known to have Senſe predominant in them, that in Time would lead them to it. In a Word, I never knew any extraordinary tender Walker, and knowing, continuing ſo, that ſtumbled in this; and this Deluſion ſeemed to me to be a particular Judgment on adulterous Profeſſors, whereas the Goſpel takes and appprehends all Sorts. *8thly*, I conſidered, that if there was any Thing commendable in them, ſuch as their Unwillingneſs to pray raſhly, but in the Spirit, their waiting and cloſe attending on the Spirit, their Mortification to the World, their Self-denial, their Sobriety and Temperance in all Things, their Freedom in reproving all Sorts, and their Diligence in exhorting all; I ſay, if there was any Thing like this commendable in them, our own Principles did lead us to theſe Things, however we generally in our Practice come ſhort; and I looked on this fooliſh People as ſtirred up

of God to upbraid his own People, and to teach them theſe Things which they ſo much preſs: Theſe Things, with their perſonal Infirmities and Weakneſs which I obſerved, with other Reaſons which I now remember not, thro' the Lord's Bleſſing had ſuch Influence as made me utterly abhor them, the Lord in all this inſtructing me with a ſtrong Hand.

§ 2. During this Time likewiſe I began to forſake the Prelates and Curates, and did forbear to hear them. The Steps by which I went were, 1. For a long Time I heard without any Scruple, but never could I get any Good, and I found the outward Ordinances do me leſs Good than formerly; yea, when privately, I got Good; nor could I after Examination find anyCauſe in me of this. 2. The Curates Preaching did me Ill at laſt, inſomuch that, when I would come to Sermon in any Frame, I would come from it dead and heartleſs; and, when I went indiſpoſed, I would be far worſe. Thus I continued for a long Time; and many Times I obſerved this, but could not imagine the Cauſe: Yet at length I was ſuſpicious that this might be the Cauſe, eſpecially when Withdrawing became a doubtſom Caſe in the Kingdom, which began to be about the Time that there was an Act made againſt it. 3. Suſpecting the Matter, I began to examine it; and at firſt View my Affections began to be engaged for the Negative, ere yet my Judgment was determined: And, by looking to it, I found the Weakneſs of the chief Grounds for hearing, by conſidering that the naked Act of Preaching was not an Ordinance of God (otherwiſe Women, Madmen, Children, yea, and Devils could preach)

preach) unleſs by Men ſent: I ſaw likewiſe, that the Church could not make Choice of them whom God had in his Word diſcharged: I ſaw likewiſe, that we might ſeparate from theſe that were never excommunicate: I was convinced likewiſe, that the true viſible Church did not ſtand ſo much in the Multitude, as in the ſerious Profeſſors of the Truths of God; and that theſe few, continuing faithful, were rather to be followed than the Multitude. Having laid theſe Principles, a Door was open. 4. I went a good while contrary to my Inclinations; and one Day, going, I was compelled to return back again, and durſt not for Terror go forwards: Upon which I prayed to God, that if he were diſpleaſed with my going, that he would give me ſome Sign thereof, and that he might be pleaſed to bleſs my private Exerciſes; which the Lord did, ſo as, in one Afternoon while private, I gained more Life and Knowledge of God than I did a whole Year before; by which I was much confirmed. 5. About the ſame Time many providential Conſiderations had Influence with me; the Univerſality of the Godly and Tendereſt leaving them daily; the extraordinary Influence of God's Spirit on myſelf and others when ſeparate from them; ſome ſad Conſequences following ſuch as did hear them; as likewiſe, I heard and knew of ſome under Exerciſe for hearing of them, which much confirmed me, and made me think that God did own us in not hearing. I found that made out to me, *Be ye ſeparate, and I will be a Father to you.* 6. By ſearching into the Matter as a Caſe of Conſequence, I found poſitive Grounds for judging *Withdrawing from them* a ſeaſonable Duty; as

the

the frequent Commands of God, to *ſeparate from*, to *let alone*, and *beware of*, and *flee from* corrupt Guides, *John* x. 5. *Mat.* xv. 14. I thought the Conſequence of hearing to be a Hardning and Strengthning of them in their Courſes, and a Deſtruction to the Work of God: I looked on it as againſt Nature, to join and keep Fellowſhip with ſuch Rebels, that were ſo ſignally and avowedly againſt the Lord in Arms; and I thought Love to God compelled me to leave them. I likewiſe looked on Hearing of them (as it was an Act of Worſhip) an Owning of the Authority of Prelates: For *he that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me.* For Obedience to Officers, when it is active, is an Acknowledgment of their Authority: I conceived I was otherwiſe bound by the Covenant. And, *laſtly*, I judged my Reſpect to the poor People of God, and who were generally injured for this Cauſe, ſhould make me run in to them, and take the ſame Lot with them in Life or Death, eſpecially ſeeing they ſuffered upon that Account. 7. Being to die, there was nothing that in my Conſcience got ſuch an Approbation from God, as my Separation from them. And, 8. To confirm all, I beſought God by Faſting, on a Day of Humiliation ſet apart on purpoſe for this Effect, beſeeching God to reveal his Mind unto me in this Caſe; the Reſult of which was, that there were new Grounds given me of Separation from them, and my former Grounds confirmed; ſo that I continued in a Separation from them to this Day. Thus was I drawn from Curates, and by theſe Means, being now ſix Years almoſt ſince I firſt left them.

§ 3. And

§ 3. And now, being a little ſtrengthned, and looking for good Days, a Cloud came and darkned my Sky; for a grievous Storm of outward Afflictions did break out, which did indeed win in to my Soul, and which did increaſe and draw my former Afflictions to a Head: The Steps of which were theſe, (1.) The great Law-buſineſs for which I came South, and had gotten done, was at once caſten in the Hows by thoſe whoſe Names I had borrowed to the Purſuit, they diſcharging it; by which Means my Reputation was loſt, and what I ſhould gain by it; as likewiſe all my Preparations againſt ſome Debitors were made void, and I look'd on this at that Time no leſs than the Loſs of 20000 *L.* (2.) I loſt thro' my Abſence from the North, and want of Advertiſement South, 800 Merks *per Annum*, which were compriſed formerly, and now recovered by the Creditors; which afterwards I ſtrove to hinder all I could, and to regain, but all in vain and to no Purpoſe but laying out of needleſs Expences; ſo as I behoved to live on my Mother's Bounty, and had not wherewith to ſpend or do Buſineſs. (3.) And, to help this, other 200 Merks *per Annum* were evicted from me about the ſame Time, thro' want of Money to defend it, and bad Securities. (4.) Nor was this enough: After I came Home I could not get Reſt nor Freedom to enjoy myſelf, but was charged before two Courts at one Time, moſt violently, for no leſs than 12000 Merks alledged due by my Father, and a wrongous Ejection; which kept me continually travelling, and put me to great Charges to maintain theſe two Actions, being likewiſe at the ſame Time charged South.

(5.) There

ward Help. 6. Pride and Stoutneſs of Heart, which God hath been cruſhing. 7. Breach of Vows and Engagements, eſpecially of dedicating myſelf to the Service of God in the Miniſtry. 8. Incorrigibleneſs under Ordinances, Convictions and leſſer Judgments; therefore did the Lord take the Rod, *Exod.* xx. 5. *Job* v. 4, 5. (2.) *Amos* iii. 2. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 20. (3.) *Iſa.* lvii. 17. *Jer.* vi. 12, 13. (4.) *Jer.* vi. 13. (5.) *Hoſ.* viii. 3, 4. *Iſa.* xxxi. 1. (6.) *Jam.* iv. 6. *Iſa.* xxviii. 1. (7.) *Eccl.* v. 4, 5. (8.) *Amos* iv. 6. *Iſa.* vi. 9, 11. *Thirdly*, The Lord's Ends were, as I ſuppoſe, 1*ſt*, To reform and heal me, *Iſa.* xxvii. 9. 2*dly*, To humble my Heart, and break it; to break the Pride, Stoutneſs, Hardneſs and Lightneſs thereof, *Deut.* viii. 2. 3*dly*, To deaden me to the World, and to Friends and Relations; and therefore made me find ſuch Bitterneſs, Vexation, Vanity and Diſappointments from it: No Friend or Relation ever I had, but failed and diſobliged me, *Hoſ.* ii. 6, 7. *Mic.* ii. 10. 4*thly*, To give me Experience of his Love in delivering me out of all theſe Troubles, and ſupporting me under them, *Rom.* v. 3, 4, 5. to do me Good in my latter End, *Deut.* viii. 15, 16. to prepare me for this. 5*thly*, That I might be fitted and enabled to direct and comfort others in their Afflictions, 2 *Cor.* i. 4. 6*thly*, To draw me to himſelf, and ſeek him more earneſtly, *Iſa.* xxvi. 8. 7*thly*, To keep me from rotting and dying, and to hold me waking; therefore hath he been conſtantly exerciſing me, *Iſa.* xxxviii. 16. *By theſe Things ſhall Men live.* 8*thly*, To learn, exerciſe and increaſe Faith and Patience, *Jam.* i. 2, 3. 9*thly*, To keep me with himſelf

in

in theſe Times, and to preſerve me from the Snares of an evil Time, which now I find rich Men expoſed unto. And indeed I found much Good by all theſe Diſpenſations; for by the Sadneſs of the Countenance I find my Heart bettered and mortified to the World, and I drawn nearer to God, and kept waking, and have Experience of the Lord's Goodneſs; ſo that I may ſay, *'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted.* One Thing I am ſure of, I would never have kythed ſo much for him as I do now. In a Word, the Lord hath ſo bleſſed his Rod to me, as I find all theſe Ends and Fruits of Righteouſneſs wrought in me, ſo as I may ſay, I had periſht unleſs I had periſht, *(periiſſem niſi periiſſem.)* The World and the *Proſperity of Fools hath deſtroyed* many; *They have no Changes, and therefore fear not God*; and *they are ſettled on their Lees.* Bleſſed be the Lord for inward and outward Exerciſes and Troubles.

§ 5. I learn and obſerve theſe Things; (1.) Outward Proſperity puffs up the Heart, *Deut.* xxii. 15. (2.) As a Man thrives in the World, ſo hath he Friends in the World; I found their Kindneſs ebb and flow as my Fortune did, *Lam.* i. 8. *Ezek.* xvi. 37. (3.) When God afflicts, it is in Earneſt, and not in Jeſt, *Ezek.* ii. 4, 5. 1 *Sam.* iii. 12. *Jer.* iv. 12. a full Wind; and vi. 19. I felt this Storm. (4.) There is Need of great Heavineſs; light Strokes will not do the Turn, and therefore the Furnace is made the hotter. (5.) 'Tis the ordinary Lot of God's People, and they muſt lay their Account with it, to find Trouble in and from the World, *Jo.* xvi. ult. *Thro' much Tribulation we muſt enter into the King-*

Kingdom of God. (6.) All Inventions and Means are in vain to deliver out of Trouble, till the acceptable Year come: *In vain ſhalt thou uſe many Medicines.* All Means were broken. (7.) The Storms of God's People may laſt long, ſo as they may be put to cry, *How long?* and their whole Years ſpent in Sighing, *Pſal.* xiii. 1. (8.) The Want of the Company of God's People is a great Evil, and a great Step to Defection; I found the Loſs of it. *Eccl.* iv. 10. *Wo to him that is alone.* (9.) Their Company is a great Mercy, and a bleſſed Mean to beget Life, 1 *Pet.* iii. 1. to maintain it, and recover Life, *Eccl.* iv. 9, 10, 11, 12. Thro' good Company I recovered again. (10.) No greater Curſe than for a Man to get his Will and Deſires in the World: I ever got a Wound when I had the Deſires of my Heart; Then Leanneſs was ſent to my Soul. (11.) Whatever Sin the Lord lets go with his People, yet will he not let Pride go with them. I was ſeeking to be great in the World, *Jam.* iv. 6. 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 25. (12.) Ordinarily Men at firſt get no Good by Afflictions, but are rather worſe, and are felled under them, *Hoſ.* ii. 6, 7. *Iſa.* lvii. 17. (13.) The Croſſes of the People of God are ſtill and ever ſanctified unto them really, *for it ſhall accompliſh that whereunto it is ſent*; and therefore they are bleſſed Things. *'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted.* Heb. xii. 11. (14.) The Good is not preſently ſeen, tho' it be, but there is much Corruption ſeen: God doth Good, tho' we ſee it not. *They knew not that I healed them,* Hoſ. xi. 3. *In the latter End ye ſhall conſider it.* (15.) God ſhews much Mercy in Affliction; he lays

it

it not on till they be able to bear it, and he *ſtays his rough Wind in the Day of his eaſt Wind.* The Lord gave ſome Mitigation and a breathing Time, and ſtrengthned the Soul, and by his Viſitations upheld it, *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 3. leſt they ſhould be ſwallowed up of Grief and Sorrow. (16.) As the People of God are graciouſly exerciſed under Trouble, ſo doth there much ill Blood came out too. I dare not ſay but Grace was exerciſed, but oh how much Corruption was there! how much Fainting, Murmuring, Unbelief, and ſeeking to carnal Means was there! and how ſlowly did my Droſs go away! (17.) The Beginning of a Chriſtian Warfare and Life is the hardeſt, and the Entry is ſtraiteſt: *The latter End is Peace; to do thee Good in thy latter End.* (18.) Sin and Afflictions do ordinarily tryſt together, and Sin is the Sting of Croſſes; *The Sting of Death is Sin.* A proud, murmuring, ſinful Heart makes Weights and Burdens painful. (19.) God's Love is more ſeen in comforting and ſtrengthning under Trouble, than in delivering from it, *Luke* xii. 32. (20.) God is the only Comforter of his People under Afflictions: *In thee the Fatherleſs findeth Mercy; In me ye ſhall have Peace.*

SECT. V.

Of my Recovery out of Decays and Afflictions.

1. BEing in this forſaken and deſolate Caſe, and none to pity, it pleaſed the Lord to look upon me, and to give my ſoul a reſting Place, when forſaken of all others; he was the only Friend in Adverſity. (1.) He

ſtrengthned my Soul by comfortable Words, allaying thereby the Extremity of my Afflictions; then did he ſay unto me, *Why art thou diſquieted?* Is there any Thing but what is ordinary befallen thee? Are there not many Thouſands that would change Conditions with thee? All this is but Bairns-play to what others have ſuffered: Is it not good that thou art thus afflicted? Thou haſt much of Chriſt's Compaſſion, and Pity, and Tenderneſs; it may be he will do thee Good for this: 'Tis good that this is the Vengeance he takes for all that thou haſt done; *Chaſtned of the Lord, that thou mayſt not be condemned with the World.* Poor Soul, what haſt thou loſt? Thy Loſs hath been only the Things of the World, in which no Part of thy Happineſs doth conſiſt: Art thou not in thy Father's Hand? and will not thy Tutor order all Things well? Men and Devils can do no more than he preſcribes; and doſt thou fear Evil from that Airth? And ſhouldſt thou not bear all that comes from him? But conſider further, wouldſt thou yet exchange States with the mad World? All thy Adverſaries, in all Likelyhood, that are now making merry, are to burn in Hell for ever; Is thy Miſery any Thing to theſe? Wait therefore upon God: A little Time will blow over this Storm; 'tis ſo violent, that it cannot laſt long; And tho' thy Caſe be very ſad, yet is it not beyond the Reach of God's Power; yea, for all this thou ſhalt bleſs the Day that ever thou waſt afflicted: Afflictions are good Things, elſe had they never been left in Legacy by Chriſt, nor promiſed in the new Covenant. With theſe and the like Conſiderations was my Soul ſeveral

Times,

Times, in my Extremity, refreſh'd and allayed. (2.) I would get much Eaſe ſometimes by pouring out of my Soul to God in Prayer, and ſhewing him my Caſe; which at firſt I could not win unto. (3.) I had general Letters of looſing Arreſtments; ſome Perſons were left out; I was counſelled, in reſpect it was juſt, and did proceed upon an Omiſſion and Sloth, to inſert and interline the other Perſons, and to execute it particularly: To which I condeſcended at firſt, but afterwards I had Scruples of it, imagining it to be illegal; and tho' it was juſt, yet there ſhould be ſo much Reſpect to the Law, as not to contraveen it, or to lie on it. Being in this Strait, and bound for two Days Space, I could get none prayed, the Lord thereby ſhewing himſelf diſpleaſed with ſuch a Procedure: I did all I could to clear my Conſcience, but the more was I bound and ſtraitned; and to ſatisfy my Conſcience my Will could not condeſcend: Thus was I racked betwixt Conſcience and Intereſt, each of them impriſoning me. At laſt I prayed to the Lord, that with his Power he would bow my Will to his. The Lord heard, and convinced me of the Sinfulneſs and Inconveniency of the Thing, and of my Duty. Well then, quoth I, as delivered from a Priſon, tho' I ſhould loſe 10000 Merks by it, I will not diſpleaſe the Lord's Deputy; let me have War with all, but Peace with God, let the Hazard and Prejudice be what it can; and thereupon immediately and fully reſolved to forgo my Intereſt, and leave the Lord to recompenſe me: Which when I had once win unto, immediately there came a ſweet Calm into my Soul, Acceſs to God, my Mouth opened in Prayer,

on ſuch a Scruple. (4.) Quickly did the
reward me even outwardly: For my Adve
that had charged me for a Spulzie, and h
to his Probation before the Sheriff-court,
ſting violently; and I, ignorant what Defe
to make, had in my Company a regiſtrate
ning, which I accidentally and without Pr
ditation (God putting it in my Mind at the
Time) did caſt in, by which he, being the K
Rebel, was incapacitate from purſuing me:
the Lord ſo ordered it, that he never after c
peared to trouble me, by which Means I
delivered from a Loſs and a Faſhery, and
but one Court to wait upon. (5.) Being
ſued before the Commiſſar-court likewiſe for
Merks reſting by my Father, the Lord in
ſhewed me Kindneſs, notwithſtanding of
Greatneſs of the Sum, the Power, Knowle
Influence and Activity of my Adverſary;
notwithſtanding his Proofs were very well

me, yea, and myſelf every Day in daily Expectations thereof.) Yet it pleaſed God to ſtir up a Stranger to lend me Money; to provide unexpected Defences in ſome Books of Law, wherein my Caſe would at firſt ſtart up, and therefrom be provided with what to ſay in Law againſt the next Day. The Time for a whole Half-year, in which ordinarily every Week there was a Compearance, was protracted; and when at laſt I was adjudged to ſwear or otherwiſe be decerned, and I refuſing leſt I ſhould offend others, tho' I was clear in the Matter; the very Day in which Sentence was to be pronounced againſt me, by threatning the Judges with caſting in a Horning againſt them, I got them for that Day to delay it: Which Horning I came very accidentally by, and ſo not only got it delayed, but my Adverſary wearied with ſuch Delays, and his Commiſſion at the ſame Time taken away, he gave over the the Purſuit, and never further troubled me till this Day; and I got, partly by reading, and partly by pleading, and hearing the Form, a competent Meaſure of Knowledge in the Law.

§ 2. At the ſame Time I was growing in my ſpiritual Condition, recovering out of my Decays, and increaſing in Faith, in Diligence and Strength; likewiſe the Evidence of Regeneration in the Duty of Examination was diſcovered, Miſtakes cleared, and Buds of the new Nature did appear above Ground; the Scriptures were very ſweet, Occaſions of meeting with God ſeldom in vain; this I had to counterbalance my outward Troubles; ſo that, as the Lord did bear down with one Hand, he ſupported with the other. One Time in *F.* I was ſtrongly inlight-

ned in the Myſtery of the Trinity; another Night I was ſo taken up with the Thoughts of the Love of Chriſt, and refreſht, that I awaked the whole Winter-night, admiring Chriſt, and praying with ſuitable Affection; and at other Times would ſpend two or three Hours in Prayer: Likewiſe at the ſame Time, writing on the Scriptures, I received much Light, Clearneſs and Sweetneſs: (We were then living in a Burrows-town.) Several extraordinary Viſits would the Lord beſtow on me, remembring my Afflictions, by which I would oftentimes be carried above the World. I wrote at this Time a compleat Treatiſe of Afflictions, and of Converſion; as likewiſe finiſhed a Treatiſe concerning the Scriptures almoſt, and wrote ſeveral Things on the Attributes of God, and ſome other Miſcellanies, in which I was extraordinarily aſſiſted, and with which I was very much benefited; and altho' there was but one Profeſſor in the Town, and he clothed with many Weakneſſes, yet did I find great Advantage in his Company, in praying together and conferring. I likewiſe remember this, that the Lord would be very kind to me (whilſt others were at Sermon on the Lord's Day) in private, and when others would revile me, and look down upon me, and taunt me, and vex me; ſo as, when Friends looked aloof, the Lord would draw near; inſomuch that I knew not when I profited more than now.

§ 3. When we came home again, the Lord was no leſs kind to me, yea, exceeded; and I was daily admitted to nearer and nearer Fellowſhip with himſelf: And, wherever I was, God was with me; and continued thus till *October* 1. Writing

ting ſeveral Meditations did me much Good, and ſpeaking unto the Family. 2. About this Time did I begin to ſtudy Faith, and the Covenant of Grace: And one Time, from *Rom.* v. and from the Conſideration of Baptiſm, was I mightily ſtrengthned in Aſſurance and Confidence, and *the Joy of the Lord* did I find to be *my Strength.* 3. Another Time, ſetting ſome Time apart one Afternoon for examining my Condition, tho' at firſt I was very indiſpoſed, yet the Lord ſo ſhined and countenanced me, as that Evidences were very clear, and I found undoubted Marks of Sanctification; with which I was ſo inlightned and refreſh'd, that in the Strength thereof I walked many Days. 4. I diſcovered a marvellous and great Depth in the Covenant of Grace; I was much inlightned and ſtrengthned in the Extent, Freedom and Excellency thereof; I ſaw it a very rational Thing to believe: And, among other Conſiderations that did much ſtrengthen me, this was one, That God required no other Thing than to be content; ſo that, if I were content, I needed not doubt. And why do I mourn for want of Chriſt (ſaid I) if I be not content? And I thought and ſuppoſed, and put it home to my own Soul, if Chriſt would come down from Heaven, and draw up ſuch a Covenant, wherein Himſelf and all Things were promiſed, would I willingly ſubſcribe this Covenant? The Lord one Night began to apply this very ſtrongly and clearly; Why doſt thou not this? It was *a Night to be much remembred* for ever. After going to Bed, in *Auguſt*, the Lord did ſo clear the Covenant of Grace, and by his Spirit made me (*at firſt* dull and weak) apply

and conſent, and feed upon theſe Privile
mine. Are all theſe Things yours? quo
Spirit; why doſt thou not feed upon them?
doſt thou not *delight thyſelf in Fatneſs*?
complains of the Want of Life, Strengt
Comfort; Why doſt thou not come to th
that thou mayſt be warm? Here's the Lor
curity for what thou wants: If thou had
Friend's Security for Money, thou woul
glad; and haſt thou not the Lord's in thy
and may not Heaven, Chriſt and Holineſs
thee? And with this there came ſuch a
Gale of the Spirit, that took away all my
ſuſions, that made my Soul apply Chriſt a
his Benefits, anſwered all my Objections ſ
and clearly, and made me ſtrongly to app
Promiſes; inſomuch that I found Chriſt a
and ſatisfying Thing; I found his Fleſh *Me*
deed, and his Blood *Drink indeed*; all Fear
driven away; the Goſpel-privileges ap
exceeding ſweet, ſo as I ſpent the whole
in Prayer and Praiſing and Rejoicing, w
now for the Morning, that I might do mi
for the Lord: My very Body was weakned
the Abundance of the Joy of Faith, ariſing
a Senſe of an Intereſt in God. I was lik
very Evangelical in my Actings, conſiderin
Actions as the Lord's Service, and myſelf a
Things the Lord's; walking in great Peace
glorifying God, endeavouring to encourage o
I now began to think how to lay a Bar c
Doors, to keep the Lord Jeſus that he ſl
not depart again: I thought the Coven
Grace would be an everlaſting Foundatic
Peace; there was more Sweetneſs found in

ties than ordinarily, and more Strength to glorify him, and greater Peace and Serenity of Mind, tho' my daily Wanderings did continue, and I was not altogether fix'd; a Storm behoved to do that. Likewiſe at the ſame Time I received much Knowledge and Comfort from Mr. *Goodwine*'s Works, eſpecially in his *Growth of Grace*, which anſwered, as Face doth to Face, to the Frame of my Spirit. The Lord's Dealings with me now, I have written largely elſewhere in my daily Diary.

§ 4. Six Days after this was *Satan* let looſe, and he brangled all my Evidences and Comforts: The Grounds were, Becauſe I found not after ſome Time the comfortable and ſatisfying Senſe of theſe Things remaining upon my Spirit; and next, Becauſe it came not after deep Humiliation and Horrours; and laſtly, Becauſe many of my old Sins continued, as likewiſe there were ſome Apprehenſions of Wrath immediately darted upon my Soul, which at firſt ſtaggered me, and made me hang down the Head as I uſed to do: But then I thought 'tis childiſh with the firſt View of Things to be caſt down, and to be over credulous, and led like a Child by my blind Apprehenſions; What know I but *Satan* may have a Hand in this? I will therefore try this, and look ere I leap, and examine the Matter ere I conclude any Thing, and ſo reſolved to ding out the Bottom of it; and therefore I began to ſay unto my Soul, *Why art thou caſt down?* And, after Enquiry, I found the Cauſe of my Trouble to be Doubting under the Apprehenſions of Unſoundneſs, and that there was never a real Work wrought *upon my Spirit.* I further examined

what

what Ground was for this, and what made this continual Struggle in my Spirit, *Gen.* xxv. 22. and after Search I found it to be, becauſe at firſt there was not a clear humbling Work continuing 'till the glorious Revelation of Jeſus to the Soul. I proceeded to try what Strength or Truth was in this, and I found a Falſhood in the Objection, and grounded upon a mere Imagination and Alledgance, ſeeing by Search I found out a ſubſtantial Work of Humiliation and Preparation, tho' it did not agree in all Circumſtances with that Work which hath been in others: I diſcovered this but darkly at firſt, but more clearly afterwards. I began to think why the Lord contended with me, and did ſeem to be angry: In Prayer it was revealed to me, that I might ſtand in Awe, and fear, and not be ſo bold in ſinning againſt him, and to count Sin a weighty Matter, *Exod.* xx. 20. I *laſtly* began to think what ſhould be my preſent Carriage, and I thought Three or Four Things were very clearly and ſweetly recommended to me; 1. Not to give over, or deſpair. 2. Not to murmure or fret or quarrel with God; but by quiet Submiſſion to yield unto him, and keep Silence before him. 3. Not to quit Duty; but ever in the Uſe of Means to wait on him. 4. To be watchful againſt Sin, and not to make my Breach greater than it was. Thro' this Exerciſe, and ſolid Concluſion laid, much of the Venom of my Exerciſe was taken away; and *Satan*, finding me thus buckled, did leave me, and tempted no more. It ended, that, in reading a comfortable practical Book, the Lord touch'd my Affections, and drew me to himſelf and comforted me, and by the ſhining of the Light of his

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Countenance on my Soul all Troubles evaniſh'd; and I was made at the ſame Time to ſee, that I not only had Grace, but there was ſenſible Progreſs and Growth in it.

§ 5. There followed upon this a certain Decay during the Space of a Year; this was about the End of 1664, and continued 'till the End of 1665, during which Time I was uſually, tho' not always, at Home. Now, this Decay was but from that Height of ſpiritual Joy, Evangelicalneſs in Working, and Degrees in Communion with God; there were more Tentations, leſs Peace, within, and leſs Progreſs made in the Ways of God; ſo as I was made to live upon my old Stock. Attempts, when any were made, were fruſtrate; and Things which formerly reliſh'd had now no Savour at all: It came hereby to paſs, that much Dumpiſhneſs was upon my Spirit, and Duties had no Effect, ſo that I accounted the Year 1665 an unfortunate Year; God had ſo long not looked upon me, that I thought I was clean forgotten: Yet notwithſtanding all this Time there was Diligence in Duties, and ſome Viſits, Quicknings and Encouragements, and yet far below what I formerly received; Viſitations were neither ſo great, nor the Impreſſions ſo laſting: The procuring Cauſes of which were, 1. My going from Home, where I had Freedom from Trouble, much Company and Comforts to take up my Heart; as likewiſe my too great Familiarity with a Conformiſt, and delighting too much in his Company, *Prov.* xiii. 20. whereby his Company was curſed to me. 2. Senſuality when from Home, and little minding of God. 3. There was much Pride in *deſpiſing of others*, and thinking too much of

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myſelf and of my Attainments, and ſomething of a ſupercilious Carriage; therefore did the Lord bring me low. 4. Evil Company, and going to Places where I had no Call, which did much Prejudice. I was all this Time wreſtling to get out of the Pit, but was more engaged, conflicting with ſome Horrours of Darkneſs, writing ſeveral Things of Faith, on Obedience, on Chriſt's Yoke, on Diligence, on Chriſt and his Offices; taking Pains on the Family; there was not much of the Care of the World entruſted to me: I likewiſe was encouraging of others.

§ 6. But God, that loved me once, did continue to love me to the End, and after many Days viſited me, ſo as I not only recovered my former Health, but ſet further forward than ever I was, thus; 1. By opening the Covenant of Grace more clearly than ever; and how that Chriſt was the Covenant of the People; and that all ſtood in him, and fell in him; and that he only was the Ground of their Joy, Hope and Confidence: And that God was firſt in the Obligation of the Covenant of Grace; and that there was no Tie on the Creature, but the ſame the Creature had on God. And I remember, one Time in private, the Offer of Chriſt was made appear ſo real, clear and full to me, and my Duty of receiving ſo manifeſt, that I did very ſenſibly and really accept thereof, which I thought was Chriſt dwelling in the Heart by Faith. 2. At the ſame Time I ſpoke in the Family on the firſt eleven Chapters to the *Romans*, and read *Paul*'s Epiſtles through; by which I diſcovered *a new* Light of Juſtification that I never perceived *before*, and of the Law, and of the Combate be-

betwixt the Fleſh and Spirit. 3. I received much Strength from ſome private Faſts I kept, to the Number of three or four or five, never uſing that Duty in vain. 4. About the ſame Time in that Month I had frequent Occaſion of Converſe with godly, able and exerciſed Chriſtians, ſome of them being in Soul-trouble at the Time; by which many Meetings were kept, and therein ſomething of God, whereby I was much bettered: Tho' in the mean Time I found not the ſenſible Effects of theſe Occaſions, yet did they me Good inſenſibly. 5. I went to
being called thereunto, and helped with extraordinary Prayer before, and there was aſſiſted to encourage others and exhort, and was helped to ſhine in a Goſpel-Converſation. And here I was counſelled to ſet up one other Sail; for before I prayed but twice a Day, I here reſolved to ſet ſome Time apart at Mid-day for this Effect; and, obeying this, I found the Effects to be wonderful. Here I began to learn Patience, and the Nature of Repentance; as likewiſe ſtudied and exerciſed my former Leſſons of Faith. 6. And there being a Semi-conformiſt there who was a little tricky, had carried in reference to the publick Times with a great deal of carnal Wiſdom, Gravity and Piety, and ſo in no little Eſteem, but then under a ſad Decay, which might eaſily be perceived by any diſcerning Chriſtian; he pretended Love for the People of God, but had ſecretly comply'd with the Adverſary, and beſides did come to Synods: I was of Nature ſuſpicious, and very eaſily found him out, and knowing he had conformed and juggled others, and finding *him all out of* Order, the Lord did put
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it on me not to hear him. I firſt ſpoke to him privately, then before two Friends, and at laſt with a great deal of Reluctance I refuſed to hear him; this was marked by others, and ſome Eſteem I had in the Country, and did by theſe Means break his Eſteem and Credit in the Country, ſo as, finding his Eſtimation fallen while he kept the Prelates Courts, he was forced at laſt to forſake them: And the Lord abundantly rewarded this my Witneſſing for him; for leaving the Country, and coming Home, the Lord drew me ſo ſtrongly to himſelf, as the Neck of Indiſpoſitions was broken, and I made to cloſe fully and heartily with Chriſt and his Work, eſteeming it only glorious, ſo as my Heart was never in a better Frame; never more Aſſurance and Singleneſs of Heart; never more Strength to do or ſuffer for God; never more Mortification to the World, and Sweetneſs in the Ways of God; and now was I fully reſolved, always, and in all Places, to glorify him. Thus was I in my Height, in which Time the Myſtery of the Covenant of Grace and of Faith was more and more revealed to me, my Spirit elevated to an higher Meaſure of Conformity to God's Will, my Miſtakes and Objections were daily falling away as the Scales from *Paul*'s Eyes, and the Signs of Sanctification were Piece and Piece appearing; and I thought, that, ever ſince the Time I acted Faith formerly, my Day was clearing; and the longer I travelled, I found the Way the heartſomer, and my Light and Glory increas'd beſide what it was in the former Days and in my Wilderneſs Condition: All this Time outward Troubles and Wants continued, tho' the Burden and Weight

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and Gnawings of this Serpent were abated; only, God ſtayed his rough Wind; they lay on, but did neither increaſe nor trouble.

§ 7. I only obſerve, (1.) When all the World forſakes, then the Lord takes up; and the World's Time of Lothing is his Time of Love: I found Shelter from him when forſaken of all. (2.) 'Tis *in him the Fatherleſs findeth Mercy.* I had no Friend but him, *Hoſ.* xiv. 8. (3.) 'Tis ordinary with the Members to be in Diſtreſs when the Body is unwell. Zion the Mother was ill now, and in great Diſtreſs; and no Wonder I ſhould have Conformity with her. *Viſit me with the Gladneſs of thy People.* (4.) God's Way of manifeſting his Love in Trouble, is rather by ſupporting and comforting under Trouble, than in delivering out of it. (5.) Divine Conſolations and Viſitations are a ſufficient Support under, and Delivery out of Trouble; for, tho' outward Wants continued, yet the Evil and Sting of them was by the Lord's Kindneſs to my Spirit perfectly removed, even as tho' I had not been afflicted. (6.) Piety hath the *Promiſes of this Life and of that which is to come:* For I find, that, as I turned to God, ſo he ſhewed Mercy outwardly to me, I got Deliverances in my Extremity; and beſides, Adverſaries, tho' they were lying upon me, yet did no Evil. (7.) A Chriſtian Life is not one conſtant Courſe, but hath various Changes in it, Living and Dying, Rejoicing and Sorrowing, Growing and Decaying. 'Tis the Wicked that *have no Changes, and therefore fear not God*: And this is, that the manifold Wiſdom of God and the various Graces of his People might appear; *and to keep them* unſettled here, that they might

might be in a conſtant Watch. (8.) It is not a vain Thing to ſeek the Lord; for I never found but ſome extraordinary Thing when I ſought him extraordinarily. (9.) A Chriſtian grows and decays as his Faith grows and decays. (10.) Meditation, and Study of the Covenant of Grace, the Goſpel, Chriſt, and Faith, I found a moſt profitable and mightily ſanctifying Thing. (11.) To caſt out with the World, and bear the Reproach of Chriſt, is a mighty profitable Thing; *He that ſhall ſo loſe his Life ſhall find it.* (12.) God is never kinder than when I am under great Loads. This is the great Advantage of an afflicted Condition, that the Lord pities moſt, and ſhews moſt Kindneſs then: And the more of the World's Conſolations, there is the leſs of Chriſt's Conſolations; and therefore in this the Evils of the World are prized above the Good thereof. (13.) God firſt learns to bear Trouble, then delivers out of Trouble. God will ever keep his People, that they be not overwhelmed in Trouble; and, when they can bear it, will at laſt ſhew his Power and Good-will in delivering them out of it: For, after all this, I was not only upholden, but likewiſe delivered from my conſiderable Vexations. (14.) There is never Perfection to a Man; in his beſt, ſome Sin, ſome Want, ſome Enemy is remaining, that will very quickly mingle itſelf in all the Wines of the Saints: Perfection is only in Heaven; here we ſhould rejoice with Trembling, here is therefore perpetual Sorrow and Conflicting.

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SECT. VI.

Of a third fiery Trial I endured for Ten Weeks Space, and how ſupported and delivered.

THere was nothing I remember had ever ſuch Influence to ſettle me as this laſt Storm, which continued very bitter, violent and ſharp during the Space of Ten Weeks, in which my Spirit was the moſt ſeriouſly exerciſed of any Time I know; of which I ſhall ſpeak but briefly, ſeeing I have it largely ſet down elſewhere. It was Soul-trouble and Diſquietment I was under, with Apprehenſions of Wrath, and violent Tentations of *Satan*.

§ 1. The Grounds and Occaſions whereof were, 1. Conſidering Grace to be ſo excellent a Thing, as it is called, *the Divine Nature*; I not ſeeing this Glory ſo as to be amazed thereat, but on the contrary finding ſuch Wildneſs, I concluded I wanted it: Where is the Glory? ſaid I. Are theſe Prayers, Affections, Duties and Exerciſes, the Divine Nature? 2. In examining my Evidences, I found Objections againſt them, and none could bear Water, or could at that Time give me powerful, comfortable, demonſtrative Evidence. 3. I was preſs'd to ſome difficult Duties, much contrary to my Inclinations; which were, in a Word, to take up Arms againſt the World, and to reprove every Man and Woman, and be free with them anent their Eſtates, and to make this my Trade of Life; and, becauſe I could not comply with this, I apprehended I was not ſincere, *but in a natural* Condition; ſeeing I had

had not an univerſal Reſpect to all God's Commands. 4. There were ſome ſeeming Grounds that might make me think I was unconverted: In a Word, the Ground of all my Trouble was, I was afraid I was yet in a natural Condition, and ſo loſt in my Sins; and, if ſo, I knew not what Courſe to take; nor did I think it probable I ſhould ever come out of it, if I were yet in it.

§ 2. My Frame and Condition was, 1. The Terribleneſs of a natural Condition was repreſented to me to the Life; and no Evil was ſo great as Sin, eſpecially a ſinful Nature: And, my Evidences being blotted, it was ſo much the more terrible. 2. The Lord likewiſe as clothed with Fury was repreſented to my Soul. 3. The Devil, getting Leave, did moſt cruelly, tyrannically and furiouſly batter my Soul with Objections tending to diſcourage me, and to create evil Thoughts of God in me, and to make me believe that all this while I was living in an unconverted Condition and Deluſion. 4. That which was not the leaſt of my Afflictions was, that I could not know my Condition certainly: Oh how happy if I knew whether converted or unconverted! for then would I know what to do; but, living in this Uncertainty, I am moſt miſerable: For I had but Apprehenſions I was unconverted. 5. In examining of the Cauſes why the Lord tryſted me with this ſudden and great Storm, I thought there was none as to particular Guilt, and I thought it drave at ſomething elſe than Puniſhment for particular Faults. 6. My melancholly Conſtitution, and want of Company and Imployment, did much further my Trouble. 7. There would be ſome Calms and Quietneſs

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of Spirit for a great Part of the Day, by reading of the Scriptures eſpecially; and *Satan* would ceaſe for a while. 8. It was not with me as in other Troubles: For, thro' Grace, I was helped to make ſome Head againſt *Satan*; I deſpaired not at all, nor did by any Act of poſitive Judgment conclude I would be damned; but only I ſaw Hell and Sin, and the Wrath of God; and the Apprehenſion was terrible. Yea, there would be great Attempts of Faith ſticking more cloſe to God than ever, ſo that I never ſo ſtrongly and ſenſibly believed; yea, I thought, as Matters ſtood ſometimes, it was impoſſible I ſhould be caſt off: And many Times was my Heart fixt, ſo that I was like a Rock againſt whom all the Billows in Hell would daſh, yet did my Bow ſtand ſtrong, and I never had ſuch Aſſurance of Faith. 9. I had a deep Impreſſion of the Things of God: A natural Condition and Sin appeared, and I felt it worſe than Hell itſelf; the World and Vanities thereof terrible, and exceeding dangerous; it was fearful then to have ado with it, or to be rich; I ſaw its Day coming: Scripture-expreſſions were weighty; a Saviour was a big Thing in my Eyes; Chriſt's Agonies were then earneſt with me, and I thought that all my Days I was in a Dream till now, or like a Child in Jeſt, and I thought the World was ſleeping. O but I thought *Shepherd* and *Rutherfoord* ſpoke and wrote feelingly! Shame, Trouble and Affliction, Want and Poverty were ſweet and ſecure. 10. Yet was I wearied of my Life, and preferred Strangling before it; my Life was Bitterneſs to me, and Sorrow did conſume me, ſo as there was a ſenſible Influence on my Body, and I look-

ed like a Man come from the Grave; yet did none know my Trouble. There was a great Work to be wrought in me, and it was Death to me to think to endure the Power and Working of God that ſhould produce this Effect, altho' I were little more than paſſive in it. 11. Duties of Prayer and Reading, only before I yoked with them, were a Terror, and to go in private with this dead Heart ſeemed Hell itſelf; tho', when I was engaged, they were ſweet. The Night was ſweet, becauſe I had ſome Reſt; but the Morning was as the Shadow of Death, becauſe I was to conflict: I would even have been content to have lyen ſtill perpetually, my Spirits were ſo overfoughten. 12. The Devil reſted not in the mean Time violently and unſeaſonably to preſs ſome ſtrict Duties, ſeeking to undo Body and Spirit at once, driving furiouſly as *Jehu* did.

§ 3. The Manner how the Lord ſupported me, and did me Good, and at laſt delivered me out of this, was by theſe Means; *1ſt*, By making me conſiderate; For at the firſt Aſſault, the End of which was to perſwade me I was unconverted, this Aſſertion was ſo ſtrongly and violently threaped upon me, that ere I knew I was dung on my Back, and my Soul burden'd and oppreſs'd, ere I knew how or why: When therefore I found theſe Weights, and my Spirit overwhelmed, and the Clouds up, I remembred *David*'s Words, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul?* So ſaid I, What is this? and why is it thus with me? ſhall I continually live in an implicite Faith, or on mine own Apprehenſions? and ſhall I be condemned and live miſerably, and never know why? Let

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us think and conſider on this Matter; there may ſome Myſtery ly at the Bottom. Come therefore, my Soul, let us ſee what is it that ails thee: Well, I ſee thou art troubled, and ſpiritually troubled, and for a ſpiritual Cauſe; now, what is this ſpiritual Cauſe? Becauſe I found it was a Suſpicion that I was yet in a natural Condition, and a Stranger to Chriſt; Now, what Grounds have we for this? And let us ſee what is to be done, and hear patiently all Aſſertions and Threaps; let this Rain fall to the Ground, and then fall thou to Exerciſe. Hereupon my Spirit became compoſed and conſiderate; and, having the Uſe and Exerciſe of my Reaſon, it did much Advantage to me, and made me that I was not like a Child driven hither and thither: I was therefore content to ding the Bottom out of this, and to examine it to the full. 2*dly*, I thought it expedient for ſettling of myſelf, and keeping my Ground unſhaken by the Batteries of Tentations, to lay down ſome practical Concluſions, to which I would ever ſtick, and always follow, whatever came; which did me much Good, and I did draw them from Chriſt's Agonies: (1.) To continue praying ſtill, and looking up to God, and never to give over Duties; Obey ſtill, come what will. (2.) Never deſpair, but always truſt and depend, and keep up an Intereſt in God. (3.) Be humble and ſubmiſſive; *Not my Will, but thine be done.* Reſign yourſelf to God in this Exerciſe; take not the Tutory of thyſelf in this hazardous Sea upon you; let him quicken, deaden, wound and comfort, as he pleaſes. I cannot expreſs what Advantage I found by this. 3*d* Means was, By being

kept by the Power of God in the Uſe of all Means, of praying, and reading the Scriptures, and meditating, whatever Tentations I had to the contrary: And tho' at firſt I ſaw little Comfort in theſe Duties, but ſaid, as theſe *Iſraelites* of *Saul*, Will theſe Duties ſave me from my ſpiritual Enemies? yet by practiſing I ever found Strength and Comfort by them, eſpecially Scripture in which I found an unuſal Weight and Sweetneſs. *4thly*, The Lord would ſuggeſt ſome ſeaſonable and calming Word unto my Soul, ſuch as this, *'Tis good for a Man to hope, and quietly to wait for the Salvation of God*: Then it is not good to be diſcouraged nor caſten down. *5thly*, I was made to underſtand that the Spirit of Bondage in itſelf was not good, from theſe Words; *Perfect Love caſteth out Fear*. This I knew not before, and therefore I ever deſired a Law-work, and durſt never meddle with Conſolations till I had found the Law-work; and now, if my Terrors and Tentations had ceaſed, I would grieve for that Intermiſſion, as tho' I had loſt ſome precious Thing: And this made me more ſubmiſſive to the Lord's Way of guiding me in my Exerciſes, as likewiſe more freely to uſe Conſolations, and to ſeek Recovery out of my preſent Bondage; yea, I found that theſe Terrors and Fears did me Evil in their own Nature, tho' the Lord, I found, did accidentally bring Good out of them. *6thly*, The Lord made me one Day underſtand, *Satan* had a great Hand in my Trouble, eſpecially in labouring to create evil Thoughts of God in my Soul, in tempting me to deſpair and give over, and diſcouraging me, and making me think I ſhould never be better

ter ; in a violent unſeaſonable preſſing of Duties ? And hence I reaſoned, If theſe Fears proceed from *Satan*, why ſhould I entertain them ? Can any Truth or Good proceed from him ? This made me ſuſpect all was ſuggeſted to me tending to Fear, and more rationally to ponder what was repreſented. *7thly*, I fell ſeriouſly and diligently to examine this whole Matter : I conſidered the Nature of my Exerciſe and Trouble, the Grounds of it, and the Weight of Objections ; as likewiſe, I fell upon Examination of my State, I laid down my Concluſions and Rules, I ſet down my Objections againſt my Sincerity, I pondered them by the Line of Scripture, and anſwered them ; I did likewiſe according to Scripture judge of the Marks I had of my own Sincerity, and examined what might be ſaid : I compared my State with the Rule, and with Saints ; and in the Concluſion I found a marvellous Light of God's Spirit, thro' the Word, ſhining on my Soul ; and I found that according to the Scripture I was converted, and that the Names, Qualities, Practices and Exerciſes of Saints did agree with me ; yea, I found ſomething in me wherein I went beyond any Hypocrite, tho' I was the leaſt of Saints. I did utterly caſt aſide all Marks that I had read in practical Books, and did examine them by Scripture ; and I found the moſt Part of them unſound and not well cautioned, and ſome not altogether falſe, but inconſiderately expreſt, and the Reader very apt to miſtake : As likewiſe, there was diſcovered, thro' this Examination, many of mine own Miſtakes in the Nature of Sanctification. Oh what need is there of Wiſdom, and Light from above, in giving of Marks !

and what a great Sin is it, either to write or ſpeak Marks at Random? 'Tis true, what *Shepherd* ſaith, *We have need of a ſpecial Spirit here.* This coſt me many Weeks Exerciſe, and ſome Years before this too; but the moſt ſenſible and effectual Diſcovery of myſelf was now. O the Benefit of Conſideration and a deliberate Judgment! 8*thly*, God by a ſtrong Hand humbled me, and made me ſubmiſſive, from a Senſe and Sight of the Lord's Sovereignty, Wiſdom and Eternal Holineſs, and from a Senſe of my own Wildneſs (*Good is the Will of the Lord*) ſo as I was made ſilent before God; which Silence did much abate the Boiſterouſneſs of this Storm, ſo that my Heart was kept calm, and made to comply with Diſpenſations; ſo as I ſaid from my Heart, My Will is evil, and God is good; and better he have his Will, than I that am ſinful; he cannot do Ill or Wrong. And for this Cauſe I did draw up ſome Conſiderations to Submiſſion, which then were ſenſibly prevalent with me, and by conſidering of which I would uſually allay the Riſings of my Heart when they would appear. 9*thly*, I did likewiſe conſider on ſome comfortable Conſolations and Conſiderations tending to Hope and Encouragement, which I drew up, and would uſually comfort my Soul with them in my dark Hours and dumpiſh Fits, and did find my Labour ordinarily not in vain; tho' ſometimes nothing would do but the immediate Hand of God, *that I might know Man liveth not by Bread, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.* 10*thly*, As likewiſe, in reſpect I found great Indiſpoſitions and Unwillingneſs to *Duties*, and Diſcouragements thereto; I drew

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up ſeveral Conſiderations and Motives to ſtir me up thereto, which in my Fits of Sloth I would uſe to awaken my Soul, and would uſually find them effectual. 11*thly*, In examining that difficult Duty of Reproving, and conſidering it ſeriouſly, the Lord ſhewed much Light and Comfort, both in the Nature of the Duty, and how to go about it; wherein *Satan* had a Hand in preſſing it; and that my Unwillingneſs thereto did proceed not from Infirmity; and that my Omiſſion was not in the Subſtance of the Duty, but in the Manner and Degree of Freedom, Boldneſs and Compaſſion, and did proceed from Ignorance and Unbelief. 12*thly*, I found likewiſe much Mercy, Good-will, Tenderneſs and Care of Chriſt towards me in this preſent Exerciſe; and much Good did it to me, ſo that the Storm was now much over. 13*thly*, But that which did me moſt Good was, a more full Diſcovery of the Covenant of Grace, Meditations of the Goſpel, of Chriſt's gentle Nature, as likewiſe ſome particular Promiſes that were by the Operation of the Spirit very clearly applied; among which theſe were the Chief, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation.* O what of Life and Sweetneſs was diſcovered in that one Word one Evening after Supper, *Jo.* iii. 17. *God ſent not his Son to condemn the World!* And that Word, *Pſal.* lxv. 5. God is the *Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth*; and he *juſtifies the Ungodly. They that know thee will put their Truſt in thee. I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance. Chriſt is the End of the Law for Righteouſneſs.*

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was never ſo livelily exerciſed, nor did ever endure ſuch a Conflict, nor ever had ſuch ſure Footing: For by conſidering the Goſpel, tho' it were granted I was never converted, yet, ſure I am, I ought to come to Chriſt, and look up to him, and expect from him, and be of good Cheer, ſeeing God is the *Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth.* And my Conſolation muſt be as ſolid and ſtrong as the Ground thereof, ſo that with this Shield I abide all Darts, this anſwereth all Objections, this is *the Rock higher than I.* 2. To make me a little more ſerious, and to have a deeper and weightier Apprehenſion of the Things of God: For the Truth is, till this Time I look'd on myſelf, and the moſt Part of Profeſſors, to be but in Jeſt with their Religion; and, I bleſs the Lord, ſome of theſe Impreſſions remain ſtill. 3. To diſcover to me the Evil of the World, of the Pleaſures, Profit and Honour thereof; and to bring my Soul to a Compliance with the Croſs of Chriſt, as that whereon moſt Security and Quietneſs is to be found: *He that loſeth his Life ſhall find it.* The World is an Evil, and only Evil, the great Bar that hinders from Chriſt; 'tis loadned with Sin, full of Danger, and an Enmity to God; 'tis Chriſt's Competitor, Rival and Enemy: And this was not only diſcovered in me, but the Averſion and Fear of the World was in ſome Meaſure wrought in me. 4. To acquaint me with *Satan*'s Devices whereby he hinders the Work of Salvation, the many Sophiſms and Miſtakes of my own Heart in the Nature of Sanctification: It made me ſearch more narrowly into many Things than ever I did. 5. To make me eſteem the Scriptures, and walk more cloſly by them in all

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my Ways: For they only ſpeak aright of God, of Diſpenſations; they are the Foundation of Hope and Faith, and we muſt judge of Things according as they are repreſented in Scripture, and not by Reaſon or Fancy. 6. To ſtir me up to be more profitable to others, which was a great Challenge now, and the Neglect of it a heavy Burden; and the Duty itſelf was much preſſed at this Time. 7. To live off myſelf and Senſe, on the Lord Jeſus alone; and not on him as felt, but on him as given in his Word and Promiſe; and not on any Thing of him to be given here, but what we are to receive in Heaven. The Concluſion was this, My Grace is ſufficient; *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong*; and here is Reſt and Life. And by this Storm, and the Concluſions I then laid, I became more ſettled, and leſs ſhaken with Tentations; and this did much eſtabliſh me in Faith, Patience, Humility and Duty.

§ 5. I will conclude with a few Obſervations: 1. Soul-trouble hath ſometimes a Sweetneſs in it; for, conſidering this was the Hand of God, I laid myſelf flat under it: Now, Lord, let me never out of this Furnace 'till my Droſs go away. 2. I found Soul-trouble not good in itſelf, but evil, and that it produces much Weakneſs and Averſion from Duty. 3. When God is angry, every Thing is terrible: Duties, Meat, Drink and Company, had a Hell ſtamped upon them; and a little Loſs, having Wrath ſtamped on it, is a World of Evil. 4. The World is a dangerous Thing and a great Evil, and the Comforts of it a Hell: 'Tis good to be continually afflicted here; *In the World ye ſhall have Tribulation.*

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Moſt of my Exerciſe did drive at this. 5. Whatever our Exerciſe or Tentations be, it is profitable to pray, and continue in the Means. 6. It is good to be conſiderate, and not to be raſh in cloſing with Apprehenſions and Suggeſtions. 7. It is a ſad Affliction to an exerciſed Soul to want good Company; and evil carnal Company is a Hell itſelf. 8. Soul-trouble hath its Time; it is not always alike violent, but I find ſometimes a Calm, and at other Times it comes in Stounds and Fits: The evil Hour. 9. We ſhould not murmur that the Lord doth not lead us according to our Minds; but, in Exerciſes eſpecially, we ſhould let the Lord guide us as beſt ſeems him, and a patient Surrender of ourſelves doth much Good. 10. There may be many ſweet Hours and little Deliverances in a Soul-exerciſe ere all be done; I was many Times caught up to Heaven, but anon plunged to Hell. 11. The beſt Mean of Settlement is to live by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt alone, and to live at a Diſtance from the World. 12. A Soul may have many Enemies to wreſtle with in one Soul-trouble, but he hath not the ſame one to wreſtle always with. Sometimes he hath the Wrath of God, ſometimes an evil Heart; and the Soul ſhould continually conflict with one of theſe at once, according as they invade him. 13. No Soul-trouble will cure all Evils perfectly; they but help in Part. 14. The great End of ſuch Trials is to exerciſe Faith, and to waken People, and to make them more ſerious. Many other Things might be obſerved. This befel me when I was 27 Years of Age, in *November* and *December* 1665.

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SECT. VII.
Of what befel me thereafter.

§ 1. NOtwithſtanding of this Furnace, yet, when I was out of it, I found much Droſs: For, 1. I was grievouſly oppreſs'd with a Spirit of Sloth and Indiſpoſition to all manner of Duties. 2. There was a legal Spirit, that made me act in Fear, and not in Love, or in Faith to be accepted; which did repreſent God as a Judge, and that he had evil Ends in deſiring Obedience; whereby there was much forced Work. 3. A kind of Averſion and Strangeneſs to God and Heaven, not having ſuch intimate and loving Thoughts of him; and withal, a Lothneſs to go to Heaven, as a ſtrange Place. 4. Likewiſe, I found a ſtrong League with the World, and the Power of it conſiderable and ſtrong; which hath coſt me until this Day much Conflict and hard Work. 5. My Deadneſs and Ignorance remained and grew upon me, ſo that I was dark in my Conceiving, and untender in my Apprehenſions; ſo that ſeveral Errors in my Converſation were vented, ſuch as idle Words, vain Thoughts, Exceſs in the Uſe of lawful Comforts, Pride in Thought and Speech, Departing from God.

§ 2. Yet did ſome of my Droſs go away with this Furnace; and bleſſed be the Lord, that made this Trial profitable to me: For, 1. I was more diligent in doing Good to others than formerly, and therefore would be oftentimes minding the Poor and Ignorant in private, praying for them, thinking of the Way to do them Good, and ſtirring

ring up my Soul thereunto. And as there were ſome Thoughts of this in private, ſo there was outward and practical Effecting of this; I would go to their Houſes, inſtruct and exhort them, and pray in their Houſes, and occaſionally inſtruct them and others whom I met (tho' of late I have been more remiſs in this) and thereby found much Good to myſelf, and my Gifts in this increaſed. 2. I was more ſtrict and tender in my Converſation than formerly, and durſt not take ſuch Liberty, and therefore cried out againſt that Looſneſs and Wantonneſs that I ſaw but too common. 3. I was by this made more acquainted with ſpiritual Exerciſes of the Lord's Method, and of *Satan*'s Devices; with the Nature of Sanctification, and the many Miſtakes anent it. A great deal of my Miſts and Confuſions were hereby blown away, and many hid Things of Darkneſs brought to Light. I underſtood by this much Scripture better than formerly. 4. My Spirit was made more ſerious, and the Matters of Salvation and common Truths more deeply ingraven, and made more weighty to me. I ſaw another Sight, and had another manner of Feeling of Sin, Wrath, Heaven and Hell; I prized Chriſt and Grace more; I feared Sin, *Satan* and Hell more; Truths were more lively and ſenſible upon my Spirit; the Matters of God's Law appeared great by this. 5. I found my Spirit more ſettled and eſtabliſh'd on Chriſt, and leſs liable to Shakings and Tentations; ſo that I have lived as to Aſſurance and Faith of my Intereſt, and of Chriſt's Love, from that Day to this, more ſecure than ever, being (as I conceived) better rooted, and having ſtronger Foundations than before; and

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better acquaint with the Exerciſe of Faith. 6. I found my Spirit by this more meekned and tamed, and leſs haſty, the violent bitter Quality taken away, and I, as it were, broken and plowed, and ſo more inured to the Yoke, ſo as nothing came wrong. I underſtand now ſomething of Chriſtian Patience, am leſs amazed with Diſappointments, and more ſubmiſſive, quiet and ſilent. 7. The World appeared vain, terrible and bitter; and the Evil thereof prized more than the Good thereof; and the Yoke, Croſs and Reproach of Chriſt more lovely. 8. More diligent in private Duties of Reading, Meditation and Prayer; ſet to conflict with Sin more ſtrongly: And ſome Impreſſions of this yet remain.

§ 3. As for my Exerciſe and Progreſs of Life; 1. After my inward Terrors as to their Power were removed, ſome Degrees remained, that would at ſome Times overwhelm my Heart, but did not laſt. 2. I was ſmitten in my Body thereafter with a painful Boil under my Oxter, with which I had been threatned ſome Years before; which, with the Pain thereof, did at firſt caſt me into a Fever, and my Breath was ſtopt by the Oppreſſion of the Spirits; which made me have ſome Impreſſions of Death. During which Time, *Satan* was let out again, and was moſt violent in his Tentations; and my Heart was ſo caſten down, that one Afternoon, being to draw in the Lord's Yoke, there was ſuch Faintneſs, Weakneſs and Averſion to Duty, that I thought I ſhould never endure it, and was not far from caſting it off altogether; but God pitied the Anguiſh of my Soul, and did break theſe ſpiritual Bonds, and put my Heart in Frame. During this Sick-

neſs he miraculouſly allayed the Pain of my Boil, and ſpeedily, and that without Means, cured it; for however I bought ſome Things to prevent it, yet, looking on it as a Puniſhment from God, I knew not if I could be free to take the Rod out of his Hand, and to counterwork him. And indeed I loſt nothing by this; for, coming and giving my Cheeks to this Smiter, my Chaſtiſement was very gentle and of ſhort Continuance, ſo as I was helped to continue in Duties; and, when the Boil brake, I reſolved to go more mightily and diligently about the Lord's Work than ever. I by this Means prized Health more. (2.) Made more diligent in Duties, had a Conflict with Death, I found it eaſy to leave the World: Yet was both Chriſt and Heaven ſtrange, and ſo had not ſuch Deſires to be with him, nor Longing, becauſe I was not a good Servant, had not my Work done, nor walked ſo cloſly with him. (3.) The Lord one Day repreſented the Evil of the World to me: This was my firſt Exerciſe. This was in *February* 1666. In *March* and *April* I continued in a wreſtling Condition, and was ſometimes in *M.* ſometimes at home, and I lay groning under and fighting with my Indiſpoſitions to Duties: Strange Thoughts of God, and Spirit of Bondage in my Actings, with ſome Terrors which would not continue long. 3. In Summer thereafter, the Hardneſs of my Heart began to mollify, and my Bonds broke on a Sabbath-day's Afternoon; while others were at Church, and I ſtayed at home, *I called to Mind the Days of old*, and ſome of the Lord's Ways with me, which opened the Doors of my Soul, and Love quickned in longing after him, and grieving for his

his Abſence, and for my Ways; which Diſpoſition continued and ſtrengthned me. 4. Thereafter I was put to learn a new Exerciſe, which was, to obſerve Providences, and to conſider the Ends of God's particular and general Providences, the Ends of Afflictions, of Sins, of Backſlidings, of Indiſpoſitions, and to remark ſome Steps of Love in them, which did me much Good: He did let me ſee much Love in Diſpenſations, inlightned me in my Duties, kept me from wrong Conſtructions, and did much eſtabliſh and comfort me. 5. Being to quit our chief Dwelling and Lands, according to my Tranſaction three Years ago, and ſome Miſtakes betwixt me and Relations falling out, I ſtay'd alone, and went to another contiguous Shire, where were ſome lively Chriſtians and my very dear Friends, with whom I ſpent Time profitably, edifying and building up one another. There I reſolved to ſet up extraordinary Days of Humiliation again, and ſo effectually, that a Glory was ſeen in the Ways of God and of his People which I ſaw not before, and Love to Chriſt advanced. 6. After I came Home I ſet up Humiliation-Days, and made it my Exerciſe to conflict with and overcome the World, to cloſe fully and wholly with Chriſt, to glorify him with all my Heart, and him only: But it would not do, notwithſtanding of ſome violent Attempts I made; whence Terrors iſſued, yet not altogether in vain, becauſe Hunger was increaſed, as likewiſe Knowledge. 7. About the middle of Harveſt, thro' Meditation on the Law and the Goſpel and the eaſy Yoke of Chriſt, the Spirit of Bondage and legal Actings begun to be caſt out, and I in my Actings was helped to be

more willing, and leſs conſtrain'd, doing Things more evangelically and freely, and by which I found greater Strength to ſerve Chriſt: And I found that Word of the *Iſraelites* to *Rehoboam* true in me to Chriſt, *Make my Yoke eaſier, and I will ſerve thee*; and the Eaſineſs of this Yoke to be the great Motive he preſſeth us with to draw in it: That the Lord doth accept little of our Hands, and will himſelf help. This, with the Conſideration of the Ends of God's requiring Duties, did much ſtrengthen me in them, and diſcovered much of Chriſt's Love, and made his Yoke eaſy and lovely. 8. About Winter thereafter, I found my Heart warming to Chriſt, and the Averſion to him wearing off, thro' rubbing over in my Memory ſome Steps of the Lord's Providences and Dealings towards me: And there my Eyes were firſt open'd to ſee an infinite Fountain of Conſolation and Love, which before was hid to me; there I remembred all the Pains the Lord took in preparing me for himſelf, how much he ſuffer'd at my Hands, all the Care he had of me in my Wilderneſs-Condition, how he humbled me, convinced me, and how many Times his Viſitations did uphold my Spirit: Then did I ſee Love in all the Tract of the Lord's Dealings with me, God in all this purſuing me conſtantly with Loving-kindneſs. 9. I found likewiſe my Averſion to Heaven wearing away, and that any Apprehenſions I had of this kind did proceed from a Miſtake: For one Day as I was praying, and earneſtly deſiring after Communion with Chriſt, and more Conformity to God's Image, and mourning for my want of this, it was *ſuggeſted* to me, Why doſt thou complain of thy

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great Averſion to Heaven? for what is Heaven but Enjoyment of Chriſt and perfect Holineſs? therefore, in prizing the one, I prize the other: And from this it proceeded that I longed to be in Heaven. Shall I think ill, ſaid I, to be with him, in whoſe Company I only find Peace and Quietneſs? who hath with his Viſitations ſo often refreſht my Spirit, without whom I can do nothing, and without whom I am Hell itſelf; who hath been ſeeking me ſo paſſionately, and whom I have ſo many Days been ſeeking. 10. About the ſame Time likewiſe I was convinced of a great Sin of Unthankfulneſs, the Evil and Sinfulneſs of which was diſcover'd, and Deſires to abound in this Grace of Thankfulneſs; which was thus occaſioned: I found ſome others that had outgone me far in Love and Gratitude, ſpeaking much of Chriſt's Love and Kindneſs to them, and what they were meeting with, and how much they made of ſmall Viſits; Oh ungrate Wretch (ſaid I to myſelf) thou art oftentimes meeting with quickning Conſolations and Viſitations, by which thy dying Life is preſerved, and yet take no Notice of it; and, like *Haman*, ye ſay, *What is all this to me*? Not one thankful Acknowledgment for all this, nor one loving Word ſpoken in Commendation of Chriſt for all this. I judged Quicknings and Viſitations of this kind but common and ordinary and ſmall, becauſe I ſaw not Chriſt in great Fulgor and Glory. That which after ſome Time did heal this Evil in my Soul was, conſidering that tho' thoſe Things in themſelves were but mean, yet they were not the Effects of my own Pains and Endeavours, who without Chriſt can do nothing; but were

the Breathings and Gifts of God's Spirit, and therefore, in reſpect they are from him, to be infinitely prized; yea, the Purchaſe of Chriſt's Blood, and a Pledge and Teſtimony of the Lord's Kindneſs, and therefore to be received, and I am not to look to the Gift but the Giver: The leaſt of Favours and Tokens from a Prince is highly valued. And this did help me to Thankfulneſs, and I did ſet a Value upon Mercies. 11. I was at this Time preſt vehemently to cloſe Walking; to an entire, cordial and full Reſignation of myſelf to God; to keep Diſtance with the World; to be for the Lord and him only, and for none other; and was made ſenſible of one Point of looſe Walking, that I did not endeavour to obſerve the Lord's Providences, and that I did not walk in his Counſel, and depend on him, acknowledging him in all my Ways: And this the Lord likewiſe helped. 12. I began a little afterwards to ſtudy Patience; I got this Leſſon in my Hand, and made ſome ſmall Progreſs therein: Patience I thought and took up under the Notion of the Soul's invincible going on in Duties, notwithſtanding of all Evils; when a Man keeps his Place and Ground, and ſtands out like a Rock, not amazed with any Amazement, not diſcouraged nor rankled, not fainting, not giving over, but continuing in a conſtant Frame of Spirit. What I ſought not I learned, and what I ſought I got not: God anſwered my Prayers tho' not in my Way, and ſhewed he accepted them; he led me in his Way to Heaven, and not in mine. 13. At laſt, that the Warning I got five Years ſince in the South might be fulfilled of the Bonds and Afflictions that were abi-

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ding me, I was taken with Caption for a Debt which I had paid: Only my Truſtee and near Relation, who received the Money from me to be given to my Creditor, did knaviſhly apply it to his own Uſe; for which, I not paying it, I was taken and kept three Days in a Chamber, till Courſe was taken with it; which occaſioned my going South, where I continued much of two Years, ſometimes in the South, and ſometimes in the North. My Condition during this Time was a wreſtling Condition with the Sons of *Zeruiah* that were too ſtrong for me; little or no Overcoming, yet violent Wreſtling. Some Work I got done; I wrote a Treatiſe of Faith, of the Covenant of Grace; I wrote a Treatiſe of forty Sheets of Paper, on ſeveral Subjects uſeful for the Times: I wrote alſo a Treatiſe againſt hearing the Curates; as likewiſe, I wrote this Book of my Life, in which I found marvellous Aſſiſtance, and found it a bleſſed Mean to warm my Heart with Love to Chriſt, to ſee through many Intricacies of my Life which were before as a Miſt to me, and did tend much to my ſettling. As likewiſe, the Lord bleſſed my Fellowſhip ſo to the South-country Profeſſors, that ſeverals of them were awakned; and generally my Converſation was edifying, and was ſomeway ſhining, ſo that I received much Honour thereby; and, while I honoured God, the Lord honoured me. I kept Chriſtian Fellowſhip with them, pray'd with and exhorted them, which was not in vain, eſpecially in *Edinburgh*, where I ſometimes ſpake four Times in a Week. The Scope of my Diſcourſes was in exalting Holineſs; againſt a ſlight Work of Grace; againſt Looſneſs and

Laxneſs; againſt Formality; againſt Sloth and Unprofitableneſs, and preſſing them to be doing Good; againſt Diſcouragements and Unbelief, and preſſing to believe; as likewiſe againſt complying with the Prelates and Curates, ſtudying to render them as odious as I could, and my Pains were not in vain.

§ 4. *Laſtly*, It pleaſed the Lord by Degrees likewiſe to look favourably on my outward Condition, and did Piece and Piece deliver me from my Afflictions, and vexatious Debts and Wants, and now hath in ſome Meaſure exalted mine Head, and given me by ſtrange Providences what he had taken from me: For I humb'led myſelf under the Senſe of the Calamities of our Family, and my own particular Wants; I beſought him to keep us from utter Deſtruction: And the Lord was pleaſed to hear; he deſtroy'd by Death my chief Adverſaries, I found Shifts to pay my many petty Debts, gained our Law-action, and was reſtored to ſome of my ancient Poſſeſſions again; tho' I be miſerably undone and vext with Multiplicity of Buſineſs and evil Neighbours, as likewiſe I'm under the Guilt of many broken Vows, and find much Prejudice by the Smiles of the World, and leſs Kindneſs from the Lord, becauſe I ſtand leſs in need of it now. Thus have I briefly run over the moſt memorable Circumſtances in all my Life until this Time, being now Thirty Years of Age and unmarried. I have been the more brief in what concerns theſe laſt ſix Years, in reſpect I have them at more Length contained in my daily Diaries, and becauſe I purpoſe to come over ſeveral Things, touching my natural Condition

dition and State, my Exerciſes, Tentations, Evils, Duties, and Courſe of Life, in the next Chapter, to which I ſhall refer any Thing of this Nature.

CHAP. VII.

Relating ſome Things touching my preſent Condition.

SECT. I.

Wherein are contained ſome general perſonal Obſervations in reference to myſelf.

§ 1. AFTER a long and ſerious Search into my Eſtate before God, I am by the Lord's Works of Love towards me, and his Works of Grace in my Soul, made to conclude that I am born over again, and that there is not only a formal partial Change wrought, ſuch as may be in Hypocrites, but that I am viſited with the Salvation and Love of his Choſen: For I find a great and univerſal Change wrought by an almighty Mean in my Soul, growing rather than decaying; ſo that thus I ſtand fix'd as to this Matter: I have both Word and Seal, Work and Carriage for it. Yet, 2*dly*, Do I find this my Belief of my Intereſt much ſhaken and ſore aſſaulted by Sin, which falls like a Blot upon all my Evidences, and takes away the Comfort of them, and fills me with ſome ſudden Apprehenſions all may be wrong; tho' theſe many Years by a poſitive Act of Judgment I was not ſuffered to conclude my Unſoundneſs, but rather, rationally and deliberately weighing the Matter, made to conclude I was converted.

3*dly*,

3dly, I have thereupon concluded it to be my Duty to be thankful, to draw near to God by Faith; and to ſearch, by Prayer, Meditation and Reading, my Eſtate more exactly; to conſider the Nature of Sanctification more exactly, and ponder Objections and Grounds of Doubting; to pray to the Lord daily to open my Eſtate to me; to practiſe Obedience, and go on in the Exerciſe of Faith, Love and Humility and other Graces; to be marking Providences, and the Lord's Carriage to my Soul.

§ 2. I find I am exceeding ſinful, and one compaſſed with more than ordinary Infirmities. Before Converſion I have been ſuffered to run out in more open Acts of Rebellion than others, ſuch as Swearing, Curſing, Blaſphemy, Drunkenneſs, Sabbath-breaking, ſinning againſt Light and Conſcience, extraordinary Strangeneſs and Unprofitableneſs, greater and manier Blots in my Converſation than in others, having greater aggravating Circumſtances: So that I think I grieve the Lord more than any other; I have a harder, blinder and more carnal Heart than others have; ſo that I conclude myſelf the leaſt of Saints, not worthy to be called a Saint. 2. And therefore think, I am called to Humility and Submiſſion. 3. To Love the Lord beyond others, as having forgiven me moſt. 4. To be more watchful againſt Sin, having ſuch an ill Heart within, ſo ready to ſlip; and to walk in greater Fear, and to be more diligent: For, if the Iron be blunt, it needeth the greater Force. 5. To depend moſt on the Lord Jeſus, as having leaſt in myſelf, and therefore to make up all my Wants with his *Fulneſs*; that I muſt live wholly on him: The

Sick

Sick need the Phyſician. 6. To preſs me to be more holy in Time to come, for a Revenge; that as I have *yielded my Members Weapons of Unrighteouſneſs*, &c.

§ 3. I have been and am like to be extraordinarily afflicted. I have ever found Trouble in the World, and God in his Providence doth ever ſow Enmity betwixt me and it: I have never gotten Reſt for the Sole of my Foot there; but its Embraces are Poiſon, Thorns, Prejudice and Vexation. Sometimes and ordinarily great and extraordinary Wants to ſupply Credit and Debts; great Diſappointments, and Evil-will from the Men of the World; rejected and looked down upon by profeſſing Friends in my Extremities, ſo that I know not one of my neareſt Relations and Friends but have put great Diſobligations upon me, and have been Bitterneſs to me, and have made me weary of Life, the People of God only excepted, who (as they were never able to help me in my outward Condition, yet) did never trouble or vex me: The Lord reward their Labour of Love. And if the World hath ſmiled on me, and given me ſome of her Favours, and I thinking to reſt me upon them, they proved like the Staff of *Egypt*, and at laſt failed me and pricked my Hand: It was the Lord only that ſupported me and kept from ſinking; and it was the mere Providence of God that did me any Good or Deliverance, and none other: And I am like to find the Good of the World more prejudicial to me than the Evil thereof, and to vex my Spirit more. 2. I conclude myſelf hereupon called to live at Diſtance with the World, to ſet my Heart by it, to fight and conflict with it,

to be mortified to it, and to look to another Reſt, ſeeing this is not it; to ſet my Affections on Heaven where Chriſt is; as likewiſe, to look on this as a Token of Love and of Good, that *I am not of the World*, for then *the World would love me*; and laſtly, to arm myſelf with admirable Patience and Fortitude to endure the Evils of the World conſtantly without fainting.

§ 4. I have a weak, complying, ſoft Nature, contrary to my Will and Judgment; ſo that I find an Averſneſs to that which both my Judgment and Will are for. I bleſs God for a clear Judgment and Underſtanding; for I am much given to pry and ſearch into the Bottom of Things, and therein have been aſſiſted: But my miſerable ſoft Nature yields to every Thing, and this makes all Duties that are attended with Labour and Boldneſs a great Burden to me. I am judged by Men clean contrary, to be rude and contrary to all Men; but little know they the Wreſtling I have with my own Heart, and what a Torment I bred to myſelf when I did not comply with Men. Oh how much need of Grace and and Divine Aſſiſtance! for no leſs will do my Turn; I have Nature always to reſiſt. 2. I hereupon find a great Reſiſtance to all Manner of Duties; ſo that there is no Duty I go about, but I find *Satan* and the Power of Sin in me ready to reſiſt me in it; and I get nothing eaſily done, but over a Mountain of Difficulties, Heart and Providences and all croſſing: What a mighty Work to pray, to meditate, to ſpeak or do any Thing! Oh Sloth! 3. My Life is a Life of Faith, and not of Senſe; I know little Senſe or *Dawting*; the Word is my only Rule. 4. I find

find God's Love and my Religion manifeſted rather in doing for God, than in Fellowſhip with God. I ſee no great Love in Manifeſtations of himſelf, but in ſanctifying me and enabling me to my Duty: And the moſt of my religious Exerciſes are in reference to ſearching out Truths and Myſteries, in a humble and fixt Frame of Spirit; and ſome Courage and Strength to do ſome Work for glorifying God, and edifying my Neighbour. 5. I gather Love and Good, not at firſt, or by any one Diſpenſation at firſt, but by a continued Tract of Kindneſs: 'Tis from many Things jointly I gather Love, rather than from any one Particular; and I find good after a long Time rather than at the Beginning; God drives his Work in me leiſurely, and by Degrees, and not at once; I know few extraordinary Things. Chriſt's Motion in my Soul is without Din or Noiſe; I ſee, by this, need of Patience. 6. My Joy, Happineſs and Hope is more in what is in Chriſt, and in the Promiſe, and to be fulfilled in Heaven to me, than in any Thing I find in myſelf by Senſe: I were *of all Men the moſt miſerable*, and hated of God, and little beloved, if I had nought elſe to look to. 7. I not only find an Oppoſition from my Nature, and Sin and *Satan* to Duties, but from Providences; and this I judged as Trials, and to be for the Exerciſe of Patience.

§ 5. That which moſt in Earth I deſire is, to do great Things for God, to ſuffer much for him, to be ſignal in honouring of him, to finiſh my Miniſtry. I contemn and undervalue the World and carnal Folk as Dung, and all the World's Kindneſs, tho' my Nature will not ſuffer

me to expreſs it; my *Spirit is willing*, but herein I find *the Fleſh is weak*. My Unprofitableneſs and Sinfulneſs is my greateſt Grief in the World; I had rather be caſt out of God's comfortable Preſence (ſo as not to be hated of him) than out of his Service: I have been ſometimes thinking that, if theſe Times laſt, my Heart will break, if I be continually ſhut up this Way, and all the Paſſages ſtopt of doing for the Lord.

SECT. II.

Declaring ſome ſtrong Evils under which I mourn, and againſt which I wreſtle.

I Find it with me as with the *Iſraelites*, *Judg.* i. that there were ſome Nations that they could not drive out: So I may ſay, that there are ſome ſtrong Evils that I cannot get maſtered at all, and which continually afflict me, and diſcourage me.

1*ſt Evil* is, That Diſtance the Lord keeps with me in Word, in Prayer, in Providences, Commands, Threatnings, Promiſes, Mercies, Judgments; I find little of God in them, ſo that I may ſay, *I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Knowledge of the Holy One*: Oh how little of him is known! I dare not deny but I ſee him darkly and confuſedly, whereby my Soul longs for him, and mourns for his Abſence as the greateſt Evil; but yet I ſee him not diſtinctly and clearly in his Glory with the Seeing of the Eye by that marvellous Light: Oh Lord my Blindneſs! Oh bleſſed Heaven, where we ſhall ſee God, not as in a Myſtery, but *know as we are known*! and, alas, I know no more of

him

him than before. This calls for Mourning and Humiliation, and addreſſing to Chriſt to open the Eyes of the Blind; and for Purity and Holineſs, for theſe *ſhall ſee God*; and for *following on to know the Lord* in his Attributes, in his Son Jeſus, in his Word, and in his Providences by obſerving them.

2*d Evil* is, The low Meaſure of God's Love vented to my Soul: Manifeſtations and Influences run very low, and beat weakly in my Soul; I find not in God what doth abundantly ſatisfy; I meet not with that which is called *the Power of God*. In a Word, I am kept in a low Condition, and very mean: Sanctification, Light, Life and Comfort are but ſparingly letten out to me; and in my Fulneſs I cry I want ſtill. This is to humble me, and make me long for Heaven: Tho', bleſſed be the Lord's Name, I meet with ſomething, yea, more than I deſerve, or ever I have been thankful for; nor did I ever kindle a Fire to him for nought. I comfort myſelf with this, that I have the Earneſt, and that is but ſmall in reſpect of the Stock; a little does arle the Bargain as well as much: That this World and Time is a Time of Wants, and therefore the Lord's People are a Generation of Seekers: That there is much in Chriſt, in the Promiſe, and much to be letten out in Heaven. I get theſe Directions; 1. To be humble. 2. To be living on the Fulneſs of Chriſt, and abundant Joys of Heaven. 3. To be thankful for ſmall Mercies, for that is the Way to get more. 4. To long for Heaven, and weary of the Earth. 5. To ſtudy Mortification to the World, for *the Rich are ſent away empty*; to keep a Room for Chriſt.

6. To

6. To labour much; for *the Soul of the Diligent ſhall be made fat.* 7. To do Good to others; for *he that watereth ſhall be watered.*

3*d Evil* is, Security and Slightneſs of Spirit as to ſpiritual Things. I am not ſo ſenſibly affected with the Evil of Sin and of a natural Condition, ſo as to wonder at God's Patience, to tremble for Fear, and ſmitten with Compaſſion to others, who are yet in their Sins. Oh I am but in Jeſt, and half ſleeping and waking; tho' I know that nothing lies nearer, nor am I more exerciſed with any Thing, than with ſpiritual Things: I ſee no Help for this, but ſerious Conſideration of the great Matters of the Law, and continual Prayers to God for Awakning and Seriouſneſs, and leſs Seriouſneſs in worldly Affairs, for theſe take away the Heart.

4*th Evil.* I can ſeldom win to the believing, joyful and comfortable Thoughts of Heaven. Tho' I really prize the Thing, to wit, Enjoyment of God in Chriſt for evermore, and perfect Conformity to him, yet have I not as yet come to any Meaſure of Perfection in this Leſſon; the great Cauſe of which I take to be, that I am ſo little in the Endeavour of this: 'Tis ſomething preſent, rather than what is to come, that comforts me. Oh to ſee this Glory as mine, ſo as to be made heavenly thereby!

5*th Evil.* That I cannot, in the Act of cloſing with Chriſt, cordially, fully and clearly give up myſelf to the Lord Jeſus alone for evermore; that I cannot expreſly and cordially marry with him. Oh for a Day of Eſpouſals! 'Tis true, my Heart really cloſes with Chriſt, and hates the World, and my Deſires are, to be for him and

him

him only, to do and ſuffer much for him; but, when I come to covenant with him, there is Deadneſs, Heartleſneſs, Double-mindedneſs, Confuſions and Ignorance, whereby much Unfixedneſs doth ariſe: I can neither covenant with him as a Spouſe, nor live with him as a Spouſe. Oh my Unſtedfaſtneſs in his Covenant, and dealing falſly with him! I could never to my Satisfaction go rightly about this Duty of perſonal Covenanting; I durſt not promiſe, leſt I fulfill not.

6th Evil. A ſecret Love to the old Husband the Law: For, with the *Jews*, I am *ſeeking to eſtabliſh my own Righteouſneſs*; doing Duties, and reſolving to be ſtrict, for this End, to get Glory from my Conſcience to myſelf, and that I might thereby appear the more glorious unto others: And I would be content to have my Works here be a Sharer in my Room in Heaven, and to be a Part of my Joy, and to have my Happineſs come that Way; ſo that what was falſly attributed to *David*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 26. by his Brother *Eliab*, that out of the Pride of his Heart he had come to the Battle; ſo it is with me in going againſt my Luſts and Tentations, it hath been to gain Honour thereby, that I have undertaken it: And when God hath put down this Idol of Self-righteouſneſs, and, by permitting me to fall, hath croſt the ſetting up of this *Dagon*, I have marked I have mourned more that my Reſolutions have been broken, and my Deſign broken and thwarted, than for any Diſhonour or Grief done to God; ſo that, tho' I ſee an Inſufficiency in my Duties, and ſo cannot truſt in them to ſave me, but forc'd to take another Courſe, yet do I

love theſe Duties, and ſo love them as I would by that Way come to Heaven: Whereby unſpeakable Prejudice hath come to me; for God hath ſet himſelf continually againſt this Evil and Idol, in reſpect I have been ſeeking to glory and boaſt in it; and therefore have I never been able to keep my Reſolutions, leſt I ſhould dote on this *Babel*. And becauſe I have been ſeeking mine own Glory thereby, rather than to honour Chriſt, I think 'tis Duty on me therefore to conſider the Evil of this Sin, the Wildneſs thereof, and to mourn for it, and confeſs it, and labour, by ſetting before me the Work of Chriſt, to prefer his Grace and Righteouſneſs for gaining of Glory, and to the Honour of purchaſing Heaven by my Works; that the Song of Praiſe may be only to the Lamb, and not unto us. Oh 'tis difficult to quit Self-righteouſneſs! 'tis a precious Idol.

7th Evil. I find a Want of the Spirit, of the Power and Demonſtration of the Spirit, in praying, ſpeaking and exhorting; that whereby Men are mainly convinced, and whereby Men ſee more in the Lord's People than in others; whereby they are a Terror and a Wonder unto others, ſo as they ſtand in Awe of them; that Glory and Majeſty whereby Reſpect and Reverence is procured, that whereby Chriſt's Sermons were differenced from thoſe of the Scribes and *Phariſees*; *He ſpake as one having Authority, and not as the Scribes*; that which *Paul* calls *the Power and Demonſtration of the Spirit*; and which is mentioned, *Mic.* iii. 8. *I am full of Power by the Spirit of the Lord, to declare to the Houſe of* Jacob *their Sin*, which I judge to be the Beams

of

God's Majeſty and Spirit of Holineſs breaking out and ſhining thro' his People, whereof ney, their Words and Carriage are in ſome Measure Partakers; which is mentioned, 2 *Cor.* iii. 8. 1 *Pet.* v. 1. *Partakers of the Glory*, which ow and then the Lord in ſome Meaſure *reveals*, ansfiguring them before the World; but ſhall e Day be manifeſted in ſuch a Manner and leaſure as the Saints know not what they ſhall e, when Chriſt ſhall be *admired* in them. But y foul Garments are on; and, alas, I am *lying mong the Pots*: Wo's me, the Crown of Glo- and Majeſty is fallen off my Head; and my Words are weak and carnal, and not mighty, hereby Contempt is bred: No Remedy for is, but Humility, Self-lothing, and a ſtudying to maintain Fellowſhip with God, for this ade *Moſes*'s Face to ſhine; to walk circumſpectfor *a Man's Wiſdom maketh his Face to ſhine*; d to expreſs Holineſs, and glorify God, and n the Lord will honour thee.

8th *Evil.* I find not direct, plain and particular Returns of my Prayers, tho' I find indirect material Returns, whereby I have been made ſee and conclude that *it hath been good for me draw near to God*; nor can I look on my Reins as the Returns of my Prayer. Not obſerg of Returns I find to have great Influence on

9th *Evil.* Want of Bleſſing on my Labours others, eſpecially the Unconverted; tho' I w and find that Saints have gotten Good, and ers put in ſome good Moods: But I fear I e drawn none from *Satan* to God; I take little Pains in this.

10th Evil. I cannot get the Leſſon of patient waiting and depending on God until the End of a Trial learned; but ordinarily, after I am ſet and engaged to wait, I misbelieve and turn impatient, and my Heart goes aſtray and turns careleſs; and then poſſibly, when this Thread is broken, I ſet myſelf to Duties: And then the Lord's viſiting of my Spirit with new Influences, is like *Samuel*'s coming to *Saul* after he had ſacrificed; ſo as I cannot ſay the Lord's Return hath been the Fruit of my Waiting: So as I think I never knew what it is to abide in a patient depending, waiting on God in a Night of Abſence till the Morning, but unhappily give over my Dependence, and interrupt my Waiting by my Careleſneſs, and taking Comfort from ſome Creature; which tho' it proceed not from a deliberate Wilfulneſs, as his, 1 *Kings* vi. 33. yet 'tis true I am ſtollen to do that really which he did adviſedly: So that as yet I have not learned that uninterrupted Waiting. So that when the Lord viſits my Soul with refreſhful Thoughts of my Privileges, and puts it in Health, yet very much of my Comfort is impaired thro' the Remembrance of my uneven Carriage during the Want of it; whereby I am moved to think, that it is not leal-come, but accidentally and not in Love, when not helped to wait on the Lord for it. It hath once comforted me to think, tha tho' the Mercy hath not come as a Fruit either my Waiting or Prayers, yet hath it com as a Fruit of Chriſt's Prayers and Merits an Sufferings, and this hath ſatisfied me.

11th Evil. I cannot win to apply particul Mercies fully and clearly, ſo as to have a Perſwa

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ſion of ſuch a Mercy I am ſeeking for; tho' I win to ſome Application of general Promiſes, ſuch as theſe, *Chriſt came to ſave Sinners*; *God ſent not his Son to condemn the World*; *Chriſt came to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt*; which quiet my Spirit: So that when I am reading of particular Promiſes, for removing of ſuch and ſuch Straits, and for giving ſuch and ſuch Bleſſings, they do not comfort me more than in their general Nature they ſhew God's Goodneſs; and therefore I find not Strength in them to plead for ſuch a particular Mercy, nor to perſwade my Mind of it that I ſhall obtain it; only they in the general quiet me. And hence I am not diſtruſtful of my Salvation, or of my Happineſs in the general; but whether I ſhall get ſuch a particular Mercy, or be delivered from ſuch an Evil. All the Promiſes of Deliverance do not breed in me an Aſſurance or Perſwaſion of it; ſo as, tho' God hath granted me many particular Mercies, eſpecially in Temporals, which I have prayed for, yet of none of them was I aſſured, tho' I have been made to hope before the Granting and Fulfilling of it; tho' ſome ſay, A Faith of Dependence is only requiſite in ſuch Caſes. But, beſides the contrary Experience of the Saints, and the rendering void all particular Promiſes, I have much to ſay againſt this. Oh to know what this means, which is in *John*! *We know that if we ask according to his Will, he heareth us*, and granteth our Deſires; and *this Confidence we have of him.*

12th Evil. I cannot win above the Fears of Men, ſo as to break out in open Defiance and Arms againſt the World; but am kept in ſtrong

Chains of Fear and Baſhfulneſs to diſpleaſe them, ſo as I cannot boldly reprove, exhort or be free with many whom yet I know or ſtrongly ſuſpect to be in a ſad Condition, eſpecially if they be great Ones: And, when at any Time I win to do any Thing of this, it is with a great deal of Reluctance, nay, greater than to lay my Head down on the Block; and I ſtrike ſo ſparingly when I lift my Rod, that I ſcarce touch them, which comes from my complying and ſoft eaſy Nature; Inſomuch that my Neglects of ſuch Duties have been Matter of my greateſt Exerciſes, and I think I fear not ſo much their Prejudice or outward Loſs, as the Thing itſelf is grievous, and diſpleaſing of Men, and to be thought ill of them.

13th Evil. I can never win to a watchful, ſelf-diffident and fearing Frame, when at any Time enlarged; but, notwithſtanding of my multipled Falls, I will when in any good Frame, or gotten up again, with *Peter*, be perſwaded that I will never be ſo as before; but will confidently promiſe to do this or that, and will not believe that any Tentation will break this Reſolution; which Confidence is not founded on the Lord, but comes from a preſumptuous Conceit and Truſt I have in myſelf. In a Word, I cannot win to misbelieve my own Heart, nor be ſo perſwaded of its Weakneſs and Deceitfulneſs: 'Tis true, in great Matters I am diffident of myſelf, but in ſmall Matters and Reſolutions I go about them continually in my own Strength, and ever come ſhort of them.

14th Evil. I can never win to carry rightly in publick Occaſions, but am ever the worſe of them;

them; I meet with little of God, and ſee ſo little of him, and get ſo little Grace exerciſed, and am ſo carnal while doing any little civil Buſineſs even to which I have a Call, that, prepare my Heart as I will ere I go out, and watch never ſo carefully, I find my whole Man poiſon'd, and myſelf worſe, and I come Home with a World of Challenges, ſo that Company and civil Buſineſs are a Terror to me, and Travail, a going to Hell itſelf. I never know what to do when out of myChamber; I have not yet known what it is to traffick Chriſtianly in the World, but have been carnal in my Ends and Carriage, forgotten God, drown'd in worldly Matters: Oh when ſhall I be ſpiritual in carnal Actions; in Eating, Drinking, Bargaining, doing all as God's Work! And when ſhall I get and do Good in publick Occaſions!

15th Evil. The Promiſes and the Goſpel, with Scripture-conſolations, make me truſt, believe and hope, and quiet me in all my Afflictions; yet do not ſo abundantly ſatisfy me, as to make me *rejoice with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory*, and as to loſe Senſe of any other Thing.

16th Evil. I can never win to keep my Reſolutions, ſo as in my Practice to walk perfectly with God, ſo as to walk in Peace; but every Day I have Challenges, not for Sins of mere Infirmity, but for ſuch Sins as might be helped, and which by mere Unwatchfulneſs I fall into; ſuch as to continue long departing from God, entertaining vain Thoughts, vain idle Words, miſpending of Time, Exceſs in lawful Comforts, ſlothing of private Duties, doing Things raſhly, and ſuch like, which are not wholly voluntary, or yet wholly of mere Infirmity. Oh to ſin but of mere

Infirmity! To walk thus perfectly with God I cannot, but there hath ever been a Breach: By what I can learn, I never kept my Vows even when the Matter was poſſible.

17*th Evil.* Continual great Unwillingneſs and Indiſpoſitions to Duties of all Kinds, driving ever like *Pharoah's* Chariots (tho', when once engaged in the Duty, I find more Delight and Sweetneſs ordinarily in them, than from the World) ſo as there is Unwillingneſs to go to them, Pain in them, and Gladneſs when they are done; but eſpecially in the engaging. Oh the Power, wicked Power in me, reſiſting God, and drawing back from him!

18*th Evil.* That I do not grow or go forward generally in the Ways of God, nor yet get a particular Work and Exerciſe throughed; I think I am like *the Door that turneth itſelf on the Hinges.* I make a Motion in Prayer, reſolving and profeſſing; but I am ſtill where I was, I find the ſame Ignorance, the ſame Deadneſs, the ſame Indiſpoſitions, the ſame Unprofitableneſs, the ſame Unbelief, the ſame Power of Sin as before; I fight, I wreſtle, but do not overcome: I am exerciſed with Troubles and other Providences, but I ſee not what comes of them, they go away like knotleſs Threads; and there is no End o' my Labour.

19*th Evil.* That I get ſo little Light, Comfort or Strength from publick Ordinances; pray, watch, prepare as I will; I mean Sacraments, Meetings, Sermons: I find not nor ſee the Power and Glory of God, ſo as to draw near to him; I meet not with God in them: I find not Sin mortified nor ſubdued, nor Grace increas'd; and

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ſeldom is my Heart bettered, but I find a conſtantly dead, lifeleſs, indiſpoſed Heart, and no ſenſible Alteration in the Time; and any ſenſible Good I get is in private, tho' I find a real inſenſible Good in publick Ordinances.

20*th Evil.* Above all, I find a great Unwillingneſs to teach, exhort and do Good to others, or to glorify God publickly; I cannot delight in this, nor go about this in Faith of a Bleſſing, nor with Succeſs, nor earneſtly; but there is with me much conſtrained Work, many Occaſions ſlighted of going about it, and the Heart itſelf dead and heartleſs, and untouched with the Glory of God, or the Good of the Perſon, eſpecially if unconverted.

21*ſt Evil.* I find not a Power perſwading me of any Truth: I have only a weak Opinion and Love to it, but I find not God with a mighty Power revealing and perſwading of Truth; yea, there hath been much of Nature in particular Truths, tho' as to my general Change and Illumination there hath been a ſenſible almighty Power; therefore am I ſtill weak in my Belief and Practice. I have other Evils, but theſe I find the ſtrongeſt, and that ſtick cloſſeſt and continue longeſt; I fight againſt and mourn under theſe, but they continue ſtill in their Strength.

SECT. III.

Declaring my preſent Exerciſes, Leſſons I am learning, ſtudying, and in which I have made ſome Proficiency.

MY Life is a Myſtery to me; what I purpoſe and intend, that do I not: Tho'

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I have been little exerciſed, and as little advanced in theſe fore-mentioned Exerciſes; yet hath the Lord been exerciſing me with ſome Things which I intended, beyond my Deſign; as,

1. I have been called to exerciſe the Life of Faith, to walk by it and not by Sight; in which, by the Lord's Revelation of the Goſpel, and from ſome Conſideration on 2 *Cor.* v. 7. I have been exerciſed, eſpecially thro' Tentations, which ſeek to make me misbelieve, and do diſcourage me.

2. The Lord hath been learning me, and I have been exerciſed in the Grace of Submiſſion to the Lord's Will in croſſing mine; and I win to write a hearty *Amen* thereunto, and to ſay, *Good is his Will*, let it be done, and not mine.

3. I have learned and ſomeway exerciſed Patience, which is a continued Submiſſion and quiet Obedience, and the Conſtancy of the Spirit, in not being ſhaken or moved or diverted with Evil; and I have this Leſſon continually in my Head, and therein have made ſome Progreſs.

4. I am learning to read Love in the greateſt of Evils, Sin, Deſertions, Afflictions, Plagues of Heart, and Diſappointments; and to put good Conſtructions on all God's Dealings; and when any Thing comes, tho' never ſo croſs, I firſt enquire, What Love can I ſee in this?

5. I am caſting out and have caſt out the Bond-woman and her Child out of my Soul, I mean, the ſlaviſh Spirit of Fear, and the proud Self-acting Spirit, beating in daily evangelical Principles in my Head, ſo as now I find more Faith and Love in my Actings.

6. I am drawing my Heart to love the Lord *Jeſus, and* to cloſe with him with my whole Heart,

and

and to be content to live with him alone, ſhunning departing from him, and ſtriving to beget and entertain familiar and kind Thoughts of God in Chriſt, and to root out of my Heart my ſtrange and hard Thoughts of him and of Chriſt.

7. I am making the World a Stranger to me, daily meditating of ſuch Conſiderations as may mortify my Heart thereunto, God furthering this Enmity by Providences, whereby I find the World my conſtant Enemy, and am thereby made to hate and deſpiſe it, and to be carried with Indignation againſt it.

8. I am ſtudying Sobriety in my Affections, Actings and Carriage, in ſeeking after Moderation, in not being much moved with any Occurrence, ſtudying always to be kept within Bounds, and to be my own Maſter.

9. I am taken up with obſerving of Providences, eſpecially in reference to myſelf, to ſee what God's Ends may be in them, why they are ſent, and what is ſuitable Duty; but, above all, to ſee God in them, in his Wiſdom, Holineſs and Love.

10. I am endeavouring to be profitable to others, and what my Generation-work is, and ſtudying the right Way of going about it.

11. I am helped to ſtudy and exerciſe Thankfulneſs; the greateſt Help whereunto is, the Conſideration that all Favours are from God, and ſo many Pledges of Heaven, and bought with the Blood of Chriſt.

12. I am ſtudying to know the Glory of Heaven, to be drawing all my Conſolations from this, and to be making it my Treaſure.

13. I am ſtudying to make Chriſt my All, even

even *Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption*; and, in the Want of all, to live in, and on, and from himſelf alone: Theſe have been my Exerciſes this while bygone, tho' beyond my Intention.

Laſtly, I learn Dependence on God in outward Straits, to recommend all Things to him, to believe on him for Deliverance, to be comforting myſelf from him, waiting for an Outgate, and to be obſerving his Hand in ſupporting under and delivering from manifold Troubles; and to be from theſe Experiences increaſing in Love and Faith: And indeed I have found manifold Experiences of late of outward Deliverances; ſo that my Life hath been a continual coming in and out of Troubles, and every Trouble ſeemed a remedileſs one till God freed me out of it.

SECT. IV.

Declaring my Growth in Grace as to ſome Particulars.

COmparing my preſent Condition with Times paſt, notwithſtanding of my Complaints of Unfruitfulneſs, yet I find theſe ſenſible Growths in me;

1. I am helped to improve Time, Opportunities and Occaſions of doing and getting Good better than formerly; ſo that theſe Occaſions that were ſpent in Vain-talking, Sloth, Eaſe and needleſs Recreations, are now better improven to the Glory of God, edifying of myſelf and others; and theſe Occaſions are likewiſe more prized.

2. I find more Sobriety and Temperance, as *to Meat, Drink*, Recreations and Company, and greater

greater Strength againſt and Hatred to Sin, and a more violent reſiſting of it.

3. I find I have much increas'd, not only in a notional Knowledge, but in an experimental Knowledge, of ſome neceſſary Points; which have had a powerful and bleſſed Influence on my Heart and Converſation. I know more of God's Nature and of Chriſt ſtamped on my Heart, the Covenant of Grace, and Faith, Patience, Duty, and the Nature of Sanctification, the Deceits of *Satan*, and Wildneſs of my own Heart, and my Miſtakes anent Truths.

4. More Diligence than formerly in Prayer, Meditation and reading of the Scripture; more hearty and frequent in them; as likewiſe making more Conſcience of doing Good to others, and pitying them more: Much in extraordinary Duties.

5. Faith diſcovered to act more vigorouſly than formerly, even againſt Oppoſitions, being more purely grounded on the Word in Oppoſition to Senſe; the Grounds more ſtrong than formerly, giving greater Eaſe, and Security, and Strength and Joy than before; as likewiſe more conſtantly and more ſtrengthned to Duties, and againſt Objections and Diſcouragements, inſomuch that theſe Doubts which before would have dung me off my Feet, I am now helped thro' Grace to withſtand; nay, to believe more ſtrongly, ſo as there is no Objection but I can ſay ſomething to it.

6. I find more Love to the Lord Jeſus than formerly, a greater Eſtimation of him, greater Mourning for his Abſence; deſiring and longing after him with more ardent Deſires, and a greater

ter Love and Lovelineſs diſcovered in him than before.

7. Patience more in Exerciſe than before.

8. More ſober, grave, watchful, circumſpect and ſpiritual in my Converſation, which before was light, carnal and unprofitable, as it is in Part yet.

9. More familiar Knowledge of and Acquaintance with God in Chriſt: Better acquaint with and more kindly Uptakings of him; and more Love ſeen in his Perſon and Providences than before.

10. Sorer exerciſed with inward and outward Trials than formerly; gathering from the Proportion of my Burdens, Hardneſs of my Leſſons, and Difficulty in the Work, the Increaſe of Strength and Wiſdom.

11. Audience of Prayer made out more diſtinctly than formerly.

12. I find my Enmity to, Contempt and Fear of the World increas'd.

13. More Strength, Wiſdom and Succeſs in going about civil Buſineſs; and of late the Lord's Hand turned upon me, in taking off my Burdens.

14. Under more ſerious and deeper Apprehenſions of the great Things of the Law, of Sin, Hell, Heaven, Eternity than formerly; more wakned and ſerious.

15. I have left off ſeveral Sins which before I was ſubject unto; as drinking of Healths, playing at Cards, haunting without Conſcience ungodly Company, Gluttony, vain frothy Diſcourſe, Lightneſs, Jeſting, and Neglect of Duties.

16. I find a ſenſible Mortification of Pride, being more vile in mine own Eyes, leſs ſeeking

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the Applauſe of others in Duties and Words, more ſubmiſſive to croſs Diſpenſations, leſs Contending and Striving with others, but bearing Infirmities, and covering them; and more Prizing of and Thankfulneſs for meaner and ſmall Mercies.

17. More ſpiritual and evangelical in working than formerly, doing Things now out of Reſpect to his Command, relying more on his Strength; more Confidence of being accepted, and more Thankfulneſs for Acceptance.

18. I am helped to ſee and obſerve more of God and his Ways than formerly, and to gather more Inſtruction therefrom.

19. And, as I think, my Gifts are increa'd, at leaſt as to ſpeaking: Notwithſtanding of late I find a Decay in ſome Things, eſpecially in Diligence, Tenderneſs and Uſefulneſs to others, being more worldly; and my Wants and Imperfections are ſo great even in theſe ſame Particulars, that I daily mourn, fear, abhor, and humble myſelf under them; nay, my Wants are ſo great, my Spots ſo foul, my Sins ſo many, as oftentimes with Fear and Sorrow of Heart I ſay, Hath God ever loved me with the Love of his Choſen? doth the Spirit of Chriſt indeed dwell in me? ſhall I indeed go to Heaven? and will Chriſt ſay, *Well done, good and faithful Servant*?

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SECT. V.

Declaring the objective Grounds doubting my Converſion and actu tereſt in Chriſt, with the ſpecial a neral Anſwers thereto.

SINCE the Time I knew any Thing until this Day, the Tempter has not to make me continually raze the F tions: And I find that it has been his f greateſt Drift to make me doubt of my (ſion, by proponing of falſe Marks, and me to imagine Grace to be another Thi indeed it was; and by inconſiderate rea Marks of Sanctification given in good Bool of which I found afterwards not well cau and by a confident aſſerting I was not con So that, for the Space of three Years af real Converſion, I not only doubted of m verſion, but believed that I was all the T ther in an unconverted State; but th was in the Way, and had good Hopes the Lord making the Fruits of Sanctifica appear, I began to think otherwiſe, and ceſs of Time to think rather I was con and to ſettle that as a Concluſion, which t Devil cannot totally overturn, yet ceaſes to ſhake it; which by Search I found ou ſumm'd up in theſe twenty Branches.

1ſt Ground. Becauſe there was not ſuc ſtinct, long, orderly and deep Work of ration and Humiliation at firſt Converſi found deſcribed in practical Books writin new Birth. *Anſwer.* There was a Wor

Almighty Power of Chriſt diſcovering Sin and a natural Condition as the greateſt Evils, which put me out to reſtleſs Endeavours to come out of this; and I found the Inability of myſelf and all Duties to bring me out of this Condition: And the Lord did by a marvellous Light diſcover the Lord Jeſus to me as the Saviour of Sinners, and their full Happineſs; and my Heart immediately cloſed with him wholly and fully, which in its Fruits hath continued to this Day. 2*do*, That tho' the Subſtantials of Converſion be obſerved generally amongſt all, yet do not all Perſons Caſes agree as to the Circumſtantials of Converſion, that is, as to the Length, Meaſure and Manner of the Spirit of Bondage; as is likewiſe clear from Scripture. 3*tio*, The Queſtion is not ſo much how Chriſt came in, as if he be in: If ye find the Fruits of Holineſs, it is well, tho' ye know not how they were ſown or grown; *The Kingdom of Heaven cometh not with Obſervation.*

2*d Ground.* My ordinary, uneven, unſettled, unprofitable Way of walking with the Lord, the ordinary Strayings and Departings of my Heart from God; which Unſtableneſs in all my Ways makes me fear Double-mindedneſs, and to queſtion whether my Heart did ever find and ſee the exceeding Evil of Sin, ſeeing I ſo eaſily fall into it; and how this can conſiſt with the Love of God that ought to be in the Heart. *Anſwer.* Tho' I cannot deny theſe Sins as to the Matter, yet theſe Conſiderations are ſuggeſted unto me as Anſwer thereunto; 1. They are not the Spots of the World, 2 *Pet.* ii. 20. they are as to their Nature like the *Spots of his Children*; they are Unwatchfulneſs, Shortcomings as to the Heights

of Duty, idle Words, Fits of Unbelief, Carnality in the Uſe of lawful Comforts. 2. I bleſs God they are not the Sins of the Time; I have been thro' Grace kept from bowing of the Knee to *Baal*: If I die in this Wilderneſs, it is for my own Sin, and not that I have any Part in the general Conſpiracy. 3. I find they interrupt not the Lord's Kindneſs utterly, but find that in my worſt his *Viſitations uphold my Spirit.* 4. Tho' the Buſh be burning, yet it is not conſumed; the Spark of ſpiritual Life that the Lord hath kindled remains ſtill burning, yea, and increaſing, for all theſe Showers of Sin that ſeek to quench it. 5. Tho' I have departed, yet not *wickedly* from God: I ſin neither deliberately, delightfully, with full Conſent, nor ly impenitently in my Sins; I grieve and mourn for them, and hate them. 6. I find Sin on the decaying Hand. 7. I find Advantages by my Sins; *Peccare nocet, peccaviſſe vero juvat.* I may ſay, as Mr. *Fox*, My Sins have in a Manner done me more Good than my Graces: *Grace* and Mercy *hath abounded where Sin hath abounded.* I am made more humble, watchful, revengeful againſt myſelf, to ſee a greater Need to depend more upon him, to love him the more, that continues ſuch Kindneſs to me notwithſtanding of my manifold Provocations. I find that true which *Shepherd* ſaith, *Sin loſes Strength by every new Fall.*

3d Ground. My fearful, dark, helliſh Ignorance, and carnal Conceptions of God, Heaven and Hell; by which I am tempted to draw this Concluſion, that I am yet in Darkneſs, and that *that* marvellous Light which diſcovereth Chriſt really as he is, the Glory of the Father, has not ſhined

lined on my Soul; but that all my Knowledge is ither rational, or notional, or natural: Oh my nſpeakable Ignorance of him! To which, for atisfaction, I anſwer theſe Things; (1.) That no Man has ſeen God Face to Face, but in his *Backarts*, which is a very imperfect Knowledge, *Exod.* xxxiii. 23. this was it that *Moſes* ſaw. (2.) aints *ſee but through a Glaſs*, not immediately in his Life, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. (3.) And hence they ee but *darkly*, as in a Myſtery, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. (4.) The moſt eminent Saints have much lamented their Ignorance of God, *Prov.* xxx. 2. *I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of the Holy. O how little a Portion of him is known!* (5.) This is a Time of Abſence, and 'tis but a dark Knowledge we have of one not preſent; 'tis in Heaven we'll ee *Face to Face*, and *know as we are known*, and e Chriſt *as he is*, 1 Jo. iii. 3. (6.) *We walk by Faith, and not by Sight*, 2 Cor. v. 7. Seeing our Life in Heaven, not here. 'Tis a Controverſy, whether the Sight we have here of Chriſt e ſpecifically different from what they have in Heaven? (7.) 'Tis conſiderable, *Job* xlii. 5. hat, when *Job* ſaw the Lord extraordinarily, he hought his former Knowledge but a knowing God by the *Hearing of the Ear*; and yet, when *ob* knew but by the Hearing of the Ear, and t by the Seeing of the Eye, he was then a *juſt an*, that *feared God, and eſchewed Evil.* (8.) ſaw the Lord in Glory with the Eyes of my ind once extraordinarily, and as I thought intitively, the Impreſſion and Effects of which main to this Day. (9.) I have and find the l Effects of ſaving Knowledge: I truſt in

him; *They that know thy Name will put their Truſt in thee*, Pſal. ix. 10. It makes me prize and eſteem him, and long for him above all Things, and mourn for his Abſence as the greateſt Evil, *Jo.* iv. 10. *If thou kneweſt the Gift of God, and who it is that asketh Water of thee, thou wouldſt ask.* Tho' the Thing be not ſeen in its Cauſe, yet it is ſeen in its Effects. (10.) Folk may really ſee and know God, tho' they neither mind it nor know it, yea, tho' they think they do not ſo, *Jo.* xiv. 9. *Philip* deſired to ſee the Father, as tho' he had never been revealed to him; and yet Chriſt tells him he ſaw him, becauſe he ſaw Chriſt. (11.) The Lord ſaith, *To execute Judgment is to know the Lord.* Our Knowledge of God is better diſcovered in our Obedience to him, than in our Uptakings of him. (12.) As *herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us*; ſo herein is Knowledge, not that we know him, but rather, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Gal.* iv. 3. *are known of him.* What ſhall I ſay, *laſtly*, but, as Mr. *Shepherd* on the Subject, "If ever the Lord hath revealed "Chriſt to thee, thou wilt go mourning to the "Grave for Want of him, and for thy Ignorance "of him ſo long?" The Lord knows that 'tis the Thing in the World I have moſt deſired, to know God, and to ſee his Glory.

4*th Ground.* That ſeldom hath there been a glorious, clear, diſtinct and full Covenanting with God. Something I remember of the Lord's Wooing of me; and how can the Lord be mine, unleſs ſome Marriage-day hath been? And, whenever I have gone about this Duty, how much Heartleſneſs and Confuſion? In Trouble

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I have been, but not a diſtinct Delivery. This Objection is of the ſame Nature with the firſt; and therefore I anſwer, (1.) When the Lord firſt made me ſee a Need of himſelf, and my Miſery in the Want of him, and had wearied me of myſelf, I remember then he diſcovered the Lord Jeſus in his Lovelineſs; and my Soul, even my whole Soul, was made fully and for evermore to cloſe with him, and him only, and above all, and for all Things: And as this was the Upſhot of my Toſſings, ſo was it the Seed of all Good that ever followed, and I was made to expreſs this much. (2.) As, in the preparatory Work of Humiliation, the Lord obſerves not the ſame Method with all; ſo, in the Soul's cloſing with Chriſt, all do it not under the ſame diſtinct Notion: Some do it explicitely, and expreſly ſubſcribe with Heart and Hand that they are the Lord's, and ſwear Fealty to him; ſome cloſe with Chriſt implicitely and really, their Heart clinging to him and his Ways, tho' they be not diſtinct and expreſs in this; yea, ſome cloſe with Chriſt, and are married to him, by and under the Notion of Believing on him with all their Heart for all Things, and ſo caſt themſelves on Chriſt; and this is Covenanting, as Covenanting is Believing: And therefore is Faith expreſt under ſeveral Notions and Terms, according to the Variety of Mens Apprehenſions of it, and the ſeveral Exerciſes of the Soul in going out after and cloſing with Chriſt. Believing on Chriſt, and the Will's liking of Chriſt, and perſonal covenanting with Chriſt, are all one upon the Matter, *viz.* the Soul's Union with Chriſt; the Lord is thine however, and thou art his. 'Tis both a

private and publick ſolemn Marriage; if once thou know any Thing of it, look not for ſolemn Marriages every Day: Hardly is the Renewal of a Covenant, which is frequent, ſo glorious and ſignal as the firſt Marriage-day.

5th Ground is, not only the dim Apprehenſions, but the unkindly Uptakings and Conceivings of the Lord in Chriſt, as a ſtrange God, and not under the kindly Relation of a Father and Friend and Husband; which breeds Averſion to him, ſo as I cannot truſt on him with my whole Heart: And this makes me fear I am but under the Relation of a Servant, wanting the Spirit of Adoption; and that I am yet but a Stranger, and not drawn near to him in Chriſt, not a Son. To which I anſwer theſe Things; (1.) That however in the Beginning there was Ground for this Complaint, yet that now there is no ſuch Cauſe, becauſe that by ſerious Meditation on Chriſt, on his Offices, on his Carriage towards Sinners, and on his Works of Providence towards myſelf both as to my ſpiritual and temporal Condition, I have been helped to ſee the Lord, and uptake him under the kindly Notion of a Father, yea, of my beſt and neareſt Friend, of my Life, Hope, Health and Light, ſo as *I am a Stranger as Earth* with God. (2.) That howbeit many are Sons indeed, and *have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear*, yet do they take to themſelves this Spirit again; and the Lord ſuffers this, that even his Children be as Servants, eſpecially in the Beginning, tho' they be Lords of all; and that the Bond-woman with her Son be continued with the Heir of the Promiſe, *Gal.* iv. 1, 2, 24. (3.) That as no Sin is perfectly healed in this Life,

Life, ſo neither is the legal Spirit of Fear perfectly caſt out; but, when *Love* is *perfect*, it will *caſt out Fear*, 1 Jo. iv. 18. and is daily caſting it out. (4.) That as it is in Children who know not diſtinctly their Parents, but as Strangers are afraid of them, yet have a ſecret Inſtinct of Nature, their Heart warms, and cannot be kept away from them; ſo I have found with myſelf, when moſt under Bondage and hardeſt Apprehenſions of God, that yet ſome kind of Correſpondence hath been kept up, and that I have mourned for his Abſence as under the greateſt Evil, could not be kept from him, was intimate and homely, tho' I had not ſuch Boldneſs and Confidence to be heard.

6th Ground. Becauſe I am temped to think I have not been viſited with ſpecial Love, or the Favour the Lord ſhews to his People; and that all my Enlargements, Viſitations, Light, Change of Heart, are but common Mercies, no extraordinary Thing: And what can I build on them? I anſwer, (1.) That tho' at firſt there appear little more than common Mercies in them, yet have I by a more narrow Search found ſome ſpecial Love and Favour engraven upon them, as I purpoſe to ſhow hereafter. (2.) What we meet with now are but the Earneſt of the Bargain, and that is little in reſpect of the Bargain itſelf; and it matters not whether the Earneſt be little or much, 2 *Cor.* v. 7. (3.) We ſhould judge of the Lord's Love rather by his ſanctifying Influences, humbling and ſtrengthning the Heart, than by his raviſhing Enjoyments and Conſolations: We ſee the dreadful End of ſuch as boaſt much of that; 'tis the *adulterous Generation*

that *ſeeketh after* ſuch *Signs*. (4.) The Way and Manner of Conveyance of Mercies and ſpiritual Viſitations are rather to be looked to, than themſelves. See if ye have them by Prayer, if ye have them of free Grace, if they repreſent, hold out and draw to God, and the Lord be ſtamped on them; not the Gift, but the Giver: This Day of ſmall Things is not to be deſpiſed. (5.) The People of God are a poor and needy People, kept empty, have all their Fulneſs in Chriſt, in the Promiſe; and is to be revealed in Heaven, where their Treaſure is. (6.) This is an evil Time, a Time of Famine and Beggary, in which it is good to be preſerved from Starving, and in which a little is worth twice as much at another Time *.

7th Ground. That the Mercies received come not in a gracious Way, not as the Anſwer of Prayers, or as the Reſult of my patient Waiting, but as it were by Chance, my Mercies oft-times tryſting with my worſt Frame. To which I anſwer, (1.) I have prayed, mourned, waited, and hoped for Mercies, tho' with much Weakneſs and Imperfection: It is not the Degree, but the Nature, that is to be looked to. (2.) They are not the Fruits of my Prayers and Endeavours; for there is more Ground of lothing me for theſe, than rewarding me: But they are come in a better and more comfortable Way, *viz.* by Grace. The Lord tryſts Mercies with our Indiſpoſitions, that Grace may be ſeen. It is rather a Sign of Love than Hatred, that Grace is ſtampt on all Favours and Enjoyments; *Not unto us, but unto thy*

* This was written in Time of Perſecution; and thus are other Paſſages alſo underſtood.

by Name. It is better to hold Mercies by this Title. It is not fit that the Lord's Love ſhould be proportioned to our Endeavours; where were Grace then? *Not of Works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt.* (3.) They draw to God.

8th Ground. The Lord carrying as a Stranger and an Enemy to me, croſſing me in all my Ways, not giving me my Will, ſo that it would ſeem he were not my Father. To this I anſwer theſe Things; (1.) That he cauſes Grief, and ſhews Wrath, yet not pure Wrath; he *takes not his Loving-kindneſſes utterly away*, but they are *renewed every Morning*: He ſhews much Kindneſs in the Midſt of all his Judgments. (2.) Our Will, like Children, is not our Well; and it is a Mercy to be croſſed in this: God knows what is beſt for us. (3.) This is a Time of Wrath, a Night; and what Wonder if Storms and Darkneſs be? (4.) Ye ſee, Saints have complained of this; *Why art thou unto me as an Enemy? Job* ſaith, *Thou art cruel unto me.* (5.) Senſe repreſents God falſly; 'tis to Senſe and Fancy that God thus appears, not to Faith: We ſhould take other Interpreters than Senſe. (6.) We ſhould not look upon all Things that may be Trials as Effects of Wrath; God *hideth Man from his Purpoſe*, that he may *hide Pride*, that the Soul may be patient and humble, and exerciſe Faith. (7.) 'Tis utterly wrong that any Thing without us ſhould make us doubt our inward Sincerity, ſeeing theſe are extrinſick to it; *No Man knoweth Love or Hatred by any Thing under the Sun.*

9th Ground. That Prayers are not directly and plainly anſwered. To this I anſwer, (1.)

As

er. (5.) Prayers may be ſuſpended whe
are not rejected, *Luke* xviii. 4, 7. (6.)
is no Fear while ye continue in Well-doing
in due Time ye ſhall reap, if ye faint not.
God hath given a Mouth and Stomach, h
give Meat. Your Cauſe is in Dependenc
overthrown; and it is good that ye get wh
bear your Expences till a Deciſion be given.
I find myſelf better and worſe as I incre
decay in Prayer; a Token they are not
gether in vain. (8.) Prayers may be heard
ye not know it, *Hoſ.* xi. 3. (9.) The Anſ
Prayers is not ordinarily direct and plain
Terms of our Petition, but indirect; ye
not the ſame Thing ye ſeek, but ye are an
ed equivalently in as good. (10.) I get
miſes renewed. (11.) 'Tis like, when the
will build up Zion, there will be many An
diſpatch'd. Now is a ſowing Time; her

Sometimes the Lord hears, and we are ſo prejudiced that we will not believe it, as in *Job*'s Caſe.

10*th Ground.* Want of Compaſſion to, and deep Apprehenſion of, the lamentable Soul's Caſe of my unconverted Relations and ignorant profane formal Neighbours; Oh it lies not heavy on my Spirit: Do I believe therefore a Hell or Heaven, or that the Ignorant or Unconverted ſhall go to Hell? I anſwer, 1. By confeſſing that there is great Want of Compaſſion and Faith and Seriouſneſs in this, and that there is great Deadneſs, Lord help it; for we believe, love and propheſy but in Part only. 2. I mourn for this, and this Deadneſs is lothſom and hateful to me. 3. I am yet helped, upon occaſional Views of their Condition, to have my Sorrow ſtirred, and to be earneſt for them with the Lord, yea, and to pour forth Tears and Sighs of Grief for them, and to find my Compaſſion ſenſibly ſtirred.

11*th Ground* is a conſtant Indiſpoſition of Spirit to all Manner of Duties, Unwillingneſs to enter to them, wearied and heartleſs in them, and glad when they are done; ſo that I fear there is not a new Nature which delights in the Law of God. To which I anſwer theſe Things; 1. That as there is a regenerate and unregenerate Part in every Believer, which is continually oppoſite to that which is good; ſo this Indiſpoſition doth proceed from the unregenerate Part, in which no good Thing dwelleth, *Rom.* vii. 8. and this ſhould make us queſtion our State no more than the Being of a Body of Death. 2. That I find ſomething in me that mourns under this, which eſteems, approves, and ſees a Glory and Delight in the Law

of

of the Lord, *Rom.* vii. 22. *The Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak.* 3. That therefore I am not ſo much wearied of the Duty (which I love) but of my own ill Heart in the Duty: As a loving Son, that hath a pained Foot, is willing to run his Father's Errand, and glad to be employed, and yet the ſore Foot makes the Journey a Burden; there is a Thorn in the Fleſh: An unſound Heart's Oppoſition is to the Duty itſelf; Hypocrites love not all Duties.

12*th Ground.* Becauſe I found not a full Reſolution to obey ſome difficult Commands, ſuch as plain and free Reproof, eſpecially of great Folk; plain Dealing with my Acquaintances as to their State: Which makes me think I am not univerſal as to my Obedience; and that I am but partial in my Obedience. To this I anſwer theſe Things; 1. That tho' I exceedingly fail in the Manner, as being heartleſs, general, and having baſe Ends, not altogether reſpecting the Good of the Party I deal with; yet, thro' Grace, I win to do the Duty as to the Matter and Subſtance of it. 2. That, when I do it, I find I do it not only to eaſe my Conſcience, but out of Reſpect to the Command of God. 3. That I prize, love, eſteem and have Reſpect to this Duty, and my Heart would be at it; and am ſtraitned and in Pain till I diſcharge it. I approve that *the Law is holy.* 4 I pray, mourn and lothe myſelf under my Failings in this, and have fetched it to Chriſt; and 'tis ſtrange to me that that Sin, for which I grone to the Lord Jeſus to be delivered from it, ſhould or can damn me. 'Tis the Lord's Controverſy: *Wilt thou not be made clean?* 5. 'Tis thro' Accident that thoſe

Duties

Duties are omitted, thro' my natural baſhful Temper. A Man would do a Thing willingly, but is in Bonds that he cannot get it done; I find that, *when I would do Good, Evil is preſent.* 6. There is not a full Conviction of the Duty, but eſpecially of the Way and Manner how it ſhould be performed; *How to do I know not.*

13*th Ground.* That I am not ſo taken up in Heart with Heaven, in longing after it, delighting and rejoicing in the Expectations thereof; and therefore, my Heart not being there, it is likely 'tis not my Treaſure. To which I anſwer, 1. Look, as when *Philip* ſaid to Chriſt, *Shew us the Father, and it ſufficeth us;* Chriſt anſwers, *You have known him,* becauſe *he that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father:* So I ſay, He that deſires and mourns after Chriſt, mourns for Sin, and deſires to be holy, loves the Fellowſhip of God's People, doth really love and long for Heaven; for what is Heaven but the Enjoyment of Chriſt, and Conformity to him, tho' in a more clear and diſtinct Notion? 2. My Unwillingneſs to go to Heaven doth proceed from a Deſire to do ſome Service for Chriſt ere I went: Much of my Work I ſuſpect is yet undone. 3. This proceeded from a Want of a full Aſſurance of my future Happineſs, and ſome Fears; for I love the Thing. 4. I find myſelf of late more diſtinct and clear in my Longings after, and joyful Expectations of Heaven, and my Heart more heavenly-minded.

14*th Ground.* That I grow not, nor come not Speed; nor am I throughing any Work, but ever after one Manner. I anſwer, 1. That tho'

there

there may be Growth in Grace, yet it appears not always ſenſibly, but grows as a Seed of Corn, and a Man knows not; it *comes not with Obſervation.* 2. Notwithſtanding of remaining Evils, yet do I find a remarkable Growth, tho' not in the Bulk of Graces, yet as to the Nature and Purity; I have made better Work, tho' not ſo much of it: I work more evangelically than I did before, with purer Ends; I grow downward, if not upward. 3. I have found a Growth in Faith, in Love, in Patience, in Humility; dying to the World and myſelf and Self-righteouſneſs, and living unto God: Tho' in that which I propoſe to myſelf there is no Growth. Yea, 4. There is an Expediency, if not a Neceſſity, of pulling down a certain Kind of Righteouſneſs; and hence a Man ſhall find himſelf worſe than before, ere ever the Righteouſneſs of God be ſet up.

15*th Ground.* Becauſe I find ſuch an evil Heart in me, ſuch Blindneſs, Hardneſs of Heart, Carnality, Pride and other Sins, and in ſuch an high Degree, that I ſay, Did ever the Lord renew this Heart? I anſwer, 1. *In me, that is, in my Fleſh, dwelleth no good Thing*; and as to my unrenewed Part, I am *carnal, and ſold under Sin.* There is a *Body of Death* in all. 2. As I find this in my Fleſh, ſo do I find a new Man, that knows, delights in the Lord and his Ways, and continually hates and oppoſes this Body of Death.

16*th Ground.* That I enjoy not the Lord himſelf in Ordinances, in publick or private Prayer, in hearing of the Word or reading thereof, or thro' Meditation: There is not that ſpecial Fellowſhip with the Lord himſelf, nor the Glory or Power

Power of Chriſt found and ſeen; ſome Light and Strength, but little or none of God. To this I anſwer, 1. That I really deſire and love the Lord Chriſt above any Thing, and mourn for want of him, and come to Ordinances for himſelf, and am unſatisfied with any Thing, tho' never ſo glorious, if it fetch not nor reveal a Chriſt to me: Yea, I love every Thing for his Cauſe moſtly; and it makes every Mercy ſweet to me, that it comes from the Lord. 2. Altho' thro' mine own Sloth and Unbelief, and becauſe of an evil Time and Day of Wrath, there are not ſuch plain and full Viſions of God; yet have I found Ordinances and Duties, and Works of Providence, reveal ſomething of the Lord himſelf, and of his Love and Greatneſs, ſo as my Soul hath been drawn to the Lord himſelf thereby, and to love, and admire, and adore, and delight in him the more. 3. I have found the Ordinances and Means (tho' not ſenſibly nor preſently, yet) in Proceſs of Time bringing forth real Fruits of Holineſs, ſo as I had Reaſon to bleſs the Lord for ſuch Occaſions; even as my Body is really (tho' not ſenſibly) nouriſhed by Meat and Drink. However, this Point deſerves a more ſerious Conſideration.

17*th Ground.* That my Thoughts of Sin, of Hell, and of Heaven, do not beget ſuch lively Impreſſions upon my Soul. I tremble not at Sin, Death and Hell; I am not rejoicing in Hope of Glory; and this makes me think my Knowledge and Faith is but dead and lifeleſs. To this I anſwer, 1. That tho' in my ſenſitive Faculty I find not theſe Impreſſions of Joy and Fear, yet do I find them in my eſtimative appretiative Faculty; ſo as I really judge Sin to be the greateſt Evil,

and

and am really moſt troubled with it; and I
Chriſt, his Grace and Holineſs, to be real
greateſt Good. A Man is more pained, to
ted, troubled, and cris out more for a B
his Finger, than he doth when he knowe
hath a hectick Fever or Conſumption; an
he truly judges the one a greater Evil tha
other. There is more Fear and Grief i
Damned for Sin, than in any Saint; and a
newly converted and drawn to the Ways of
with Aſſurance of Chriſt's Love, hath mor
ſible Joy than a grown aſſured Chriſtian. (
goes not by the ſenſible Impreſſions on the
ctions, or Riſing of the ſenſitive Faculty o
petite, which outward and ſenſible Obje
elevate. 2. Saints have found and lamente
Diſtemper as it is ſuch, and yet have not
their Intereſt, *Iſa.* lxiii. 17. *Why haſt thou*
ned our Hearts from thy Fear? And
David and the Church do cry frequentl
Quickning; *Quicken us, O Lord, and w*
call on thy Name. 3. *Baxter* ſaith well, "I
" neſs of Heart is more in the Will and Pr
" than in the ſenſitive Faculty;" as is eaſ
ven by Scripture. Diſobedience is Hardn
Heart in Scripture.

18*th Ground* is from my ſpiritual Pride,
ſtreams itſelf thro' all my Actions, even my
ſpiritual; And hence I find, that I reſolve
holy, to get an Eſteem, not from Men, but
Conſcience; I mourn for Sin as it is a Weal
and as it is contrary to my Deſign and R
tions: Yea, tho' I find an Inſufficiency in I
to ſave me, and ſo of Neceſſity made to f
another; yet do I find my Heart ſecretly wi

that it were otherwiſe, that Life were to be had thro' our own Works; and this makes me ſecretly deſire and endeavour to do ſomething on Earth that might be a Part of my Crown in Heaven: And I found a Deſpiſing of the Glory revealed in Heaven, if freely given, and no way merited; ſo that I am by this put to queſtion whether ever I was dead to the Law or not. To which I anſwer, omitting what may be anſwered to this by what hath been ſaid, I ſatisfy myſelf with this, That as I find a Spirit of Self and Pride acting, ſo do I find a Spirit of Humility lothing myſelf for this my Pride, and a ſecret Contentedneſs in breaking my Reſolutions even when they were good, becauſe Self was thereby debaſed, and the Counſel of the Lord did ſtand: Yea, and I find, *I rejoice in my Infirmities, that the Power of Chriſt may reſt upon me*; and I love Heaven the better, becauſe 'tis the Purchaſe of Chriſt's Blood, and the Fruit of free Grace. *2dly*, "Self "will be in every Action, ſaith *Shepherd*; and "this Body of Death will diſcover itſelf thus, as "well as any other Way."

19th Ground. I find ſuch Inſtability in my Heart and Ways, ſuch unequal Steps betwixt the Lord and my Idols, that I fear my whole Heart is not come to the Lord; I am not his only. Oh the one Heart, the united Heart, the conjugal Heart! But, alas, mine is parted betwixt the Lord and Idols; and I ſometimes delight in the Lord, and ſometimes in my Idols and worldly Contentment, 2 *Kings* xvii. 33. They ſerved the Lord, and they ſerved their Idols. I anſwer, *1ſt*, No Man ever cloſed ſo fully with Chriſt, or had ſuch a conjugal Love, but had ſome Inclina-

tions to Idols, by reaſon of the unregenerate Part. Our Union of Faith and Love is imperfect, as well as any other Grace; the unregenerate carnal Part cries ſtill for, and would be at, its Lovers. In Heaven our Affections ſhall be wholly for the Lord. 2*dly*, The renewed Part is for the Lord wholly and only, and gives not Conſent to what the Fleſh doth, but is led captive, and ſighs under the Bondage, and cries out againſt its own Heart-whoriſhneſs; and the Denomination is taken from the better Part. *O miſerable Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death?* Unrenewed Men contentedly and allowedly divide their Affections, they lothe not nor abhor themſelves. 3*dly*, I find the Lord's Intereſt growing ſtronger and ſtronger in my Soul.

20*th Ground.* When I read that the *unprofitable Servant* is *caſt into utter Darkneſs*, and conſider the great Diſproportion that is betwixt my Service and my Rule and the former Practice of Saints, I cannot conceive how I can go to Heaven, how the juſt Lord will give Heaven to ſuch an unprofitable Servant; Will ever Chriſt ſay to me, *Well done, good and faithful Servant?* But for this I anſwer theſe Things; 1*ſt*, Heaven is not promiſed to the Degree or Meaſure of Grace, but to the Nature of it; the Lord accepts Mites, Cups of cold Water, Grains of Muſtard-ſeed; he will not quench ſmoking Flax: I do Service, tho' I cannot weigh it in Meaſure. 2*dly*, Such is the Condeſcendency and lovely Nature of Chriſt, that he will crown theſe Duties we are aſhamed to own. Chriſt counts and prizes Saints Duties more than any Thing elſe in the World; *Ye viſited me, fed me, gave me Drink.*

When

When saw we thee hungry or naked? In that ye did it to one of these little Ones, ye did it to me. 'Tis Christ's gracious Property, he is soon pleased, and his Yoke is easy. Parents are wonderfully taken up with the poorest and simplest Action or Speeches of their Children. There is a fatherly Love in Christ. 3*dly*, Heaven comes by Grace, by Christ's Blood, and not by Works; Works are not your Title to Glory. *No Law-musick* (saith *Rutherfoord*) *in Heaven:* No; *Worthy is the Lamb.* Look not to what thou hast done, but to what Christ hath done; ye neither share in Whole or in Part with Christ: Good Works are mentioned, not to buy or purchase Glory by, but to evidence an Interest in Christ, and Sincerity in Grace; if there be as much as will evidence Sincerity, there is enough: The least Gold is Gold, as well as the greatest Piece.

As for these general Answers I promised, because these are included in the special Answers given to the special Objections, and in respect I am in the next Section to go over some Things relating to the same Purpose, I shall not mention them.

SECT. VI.

Declaring my Evidences of Regeneration and Heaven.

1*ly*, A Continued Prizing and Esteeming, and Love of, and Desire and mourning for, and longing after God in Christ above all Things; above Gifts, Saints, Duties, Graces and Joys; and this wrought of new in my Soul by an almighty Power. *I love them that love me.*

1 Pet. ii. 7. *To you that believe, Chriſt is precious.*

2*dly*, Real and fervent Love to the Saints, yea all Saints, and becauſe ſuch; with a Contempt and Hatred of others.. I prize, eſteem and delight in the Fellowſhip of Saints, above what I have to my neareſt Relations; and by this I gather that I am tranſlated *from Death to Life*, and ſhall one Day reign with them, 1 *John* iii. 14.

3*dly*, I am in Heart engaged to the Lord Jeſus his Service, accounting it moſt glorious; and am deſiring and accounting it as my greateſt Mercy to be employed for him, and mourning for my Unprofitableneſs, and great Loſs Chriſt is at with me, as the greateſt Evil, 1 *John* iii. 10. *John* xv. 14. and have been aſſiſted to do ſo in ſome Meaſure; and that my Shortcomings have proceeded from Ignorance and Unbelief.

4*thly*, Becauſe that when, thro' the Violence of Temptations and Suggeſtions, my Fears do ariſe, and then go and ſtayedly and diligently examine myſelf according to the Scriptures, and ſubmit it to their Determination, I find my Condition and Caſe good, and am made to hope; and if the Word abſolve, who can condemn? *Pſal.* xcvi. 13. *Iſa.* viii. 20. *Rom.* ii. 2. The Judgment of God is according to Truth.

5*thly*, Becauſe, when by the Power of Tentations and Unbelief I conclude or apprehend I am unregenerate, I find much Evil thereby, and theſe Concluſions like Poiſon utterly to wrong my Soul, and my Heart drawn from God, and utterly weakned to Duty: Whereas, I concluding my State gracious, I find my Heart enlarged, God's *Countenance* ſhining upon me, Hatred to Sin,

and

and Strength to go about Duty; which I look upon as the Lord's ſealing theſe Concluſions.

6thly, Becauſe that the Lord by his mighty Power, anſwering all my Objections clearly and fully, with much Pains, hath made me believe on the Lord Jeſus, and come to him, not only for Peace and Comfort, but likewiſe mainly for himſelf, and for Sanctification; for Removal, not of ſome Sins only, but of all Sin; and, above all, for Delivery from my wicked Nature; eſteeming really Conformity to and Enjoyment of God the greateſt Mercy, and a natural Condition the foreſt Evil, by which I diſtinguiſh my Faith from Hypocrites, *Hoſ.* xiv. 2. *Micah* iii. 11.

7thly, Becauſe my Love, Faith, Patience and Obedience have been tried by the Winds and Storms of Temptations, eſpecially inward; and yet, thro' the Strength of Chriſt, my Bow hath not broken, but he hath increaſed my Strength; by which I am made to think I am built on the Rock, *Luke* vi. 48.

8*thly*, Becauſe I have found the Lord, when he was drawing me to himſelf, obſerve the ſame Way which he uſes to draw his own to himſelf: For I have found that he hath diſcovered my undone Condition by Nature, my Diſtance with and Enmity to God, and my Wildneſs; he hath affected me with this, as the greateſt Evil; he hath diſcovered my Inability to help myſelf, diſcovered to me my Heart-pollutions, the Inſufficiency of Duties; wearied and loaded me with my Heart and Ways, ſo as I utterly deſpaired of myſelf and Ways, only hoping in the Lord ſecretly: And now, while undone, and acknowledging the Lord's Righteouſneſs, I have by many

wonderful Providences, great and continued Pains, been made with much ado, and over the Belly of all Objections, to come to Christ, and to believe on him for up-making all my Wants, especially the want of himself; and have received his Promise upon this, which hath satisfied me, and given Rest to my wearied Soul; so that now I find his Word my abiding Security, and the Lord my Light, Strength, Consolation and Glory: And being thus made by an omnipotent Power to come to himself by the Warrant and in the Authority of his Word, and that for all Things, I do expect he will not cast me off, nor cast off the Work of his Hands; but, being *called*, will likewise be *justified and glorified*, John vi. 37. Rom. viii. 30.

9*thly*, I find a real, inward, universal and abiding Change from Darkness to Light, from Sin and *Satan* to God and his Ways, wrought by a great Power; and can remember how, and by what Means, and when it was wrought; and how the Lord daily perfects it: By which Change I am differenced from the rest of the World, and from what I was myself before Conversion, and from all Hypocrites in the World; by which Change, and that *all Things are new*, I gather I am in Christ, 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *Eph.* iv. 22, 23, 24.

10*thly*, Because, comparing myself, Exercises of Spirit, Properties and Sins, with the Saints in Scripture, I find them answer to one another as Face doth to Face: I find them complain of the same Evils and Distempers I complain of; and, in condemning myself, I must likewise condemn them, and so *offend the Generation of the Righteous*. And, when I pass hasty Conclusions against

gainſt myſelf, I next ſay, Is there any that hath Grace? And ſo, being like them and of them, I think I will ſhare alike with them at laſt.

11*thly*, A ſenſible Growth in Humility, Knowledge, Sobriety, Faith, Patience, Love to Chriſt, Deadneſs to the World, and Repentance; whereas Hypocrites fall away: And therefore think that the good Work is begun, ſeeing the Lord is daily perfecting it, *Philp.* i. 6. and this ſhews it to be a Fountain *ſpringing up to everlaſting Life*, ſeeing it is not dried up, *John* iv. 14.

12*thly*, An univerſal *Reſpect to all Commands*, Hatred to all Sins: Which is kythed in my loving every one of theſe Commands, endeavouring to do every one of them, ſeeing a Glory in every one of them; and mourning for all Omiſſions, tho' thro' Ignorance and Infirmity I win not up to do them, *Luke* i. 6. *Pſal.* cxix. 6.

13*thly*, I find, by diligent Examination of myſelf according to the Scriptures, a clear Difference betwixt all my Graces and ſuch as I have ſeen or read to be in Hypocrites; and tho' I think I come behind all Saints, yet find in me what is not in any Hypocrite, *Matth.* v. 20. *Except your Righteouſneſs exceed*, &c.

14*thly*, That my Works, Obedience, and Exerciſe of Grace, come continually thro' Faith, and from Goſpel-principles, rather than from legal Motives; and that the Conſideration of honouring Chriſt doth draw me more ſtrongly to my Duty than any other Motive whatſomever of Benefit; which I look upon as the filial Spirit, and Spirit of Love given to Sons, *Rom.* viii. 15. *Gal.* iv. 6. 2 *Cor.* i. 22. 2 *Tim.* i. 17. So that, as *Iſaac* the Son of the Promiſe, I can do nothing

but thro' Faith, and out of Senſe of his and Strength, *Gal.* iv. 28.

15*thly*, That I am not ſatisfied with any l ſure of Grace, or Length in Duty, or Cor nion with God, but evermore deſire more; v ſhews to me that it is deſired for itſelf, an for its Effects, ſeeing the leaſt Meaſure of C will bring to Heaven. This was *Paul*'s S *Philip.* iii. 11, 12, 13. 1 *Cor.* xv. 57.

16*thly*, Becauſe I find true Poverty of S and find a Wildneſs in my beſt Works, mourn over my beſt Performances, wondring ever the Lord Jeſus ſhould reſpect them; g ing only in the Lord Jeſus, *Matth.* v. 3. *Iſa.* 2. Hypocrites are never emptied of themſel

17*thly*, I find a Hatred, lothing of, and r ning for all Sins of Omiſſion as well as Com ſion, Sins of others as well as well as mine Sins, ſecret Sins and little Sins as well as Sins, and Goſpel-ſins above all Sins; lookin Sin as the greateſt Evil, *Matth.* v. 4.

18*thly*, Self-lothing, and contented Subm to the Lord in hardeſt Diſpenſations, becau is the Will of God; and accepting the Pu ment of Sin, *Job* i. Hypocrites murmur v tried, and in their Heart curſe God: This the Trial of *Job*'s Sincerity; if he had bee Hypocrite, he would have curſed God eith Heart or Mouth.

19*thly*, Becauſe, in reading of the Scriptu there is nothing that the Lord's Spirit ſo app and takes to my Heart, as Encouragements, Promiſes and Perſwaſions to do Good unto otl and Patience and Faith; and to be of

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Cheer, for God will not ſpeak Peace to the Wicked, *Iſa.* lvii. 21. and iii. 10. *Say to the Righteous, It ſhall be well with them.*

20*thly*, I find that, in all Evils that befal me, I am never ſuffered to put an ill Conſtruction upon them; and a Spirit ſecretly ſuggeſting to me that it is for Good, ſo as my Heart is no way more ſanctified than by this, *Rom.* viii. 15. and this I look upon as the Spirit's Witneſs.

21*ſtly*, That I never commit a Fault, little or great, but it is corrected, *Amos* iii. 2. *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I puniſh you for all your Iniquities:* And this I look upon as a fatherly Kindneſs; nay, that which he ſuffers in others, he reproves in me.

22*dly*, The Lord by all Diſpenſations is wearying my Soul of the World, putting Enmity betwixt me and the World more and more; whereby I gather that I am not of the World.

23*dly*, The Lord's conſtant following me with manifold Kindneſſes and Love, in ſtrengthning, comforting, quickning, ſupporting, viſiting and delivering me, being with me always in all my Ways, never leaving me, doing me always Good, bearing with all my Infirmities: I find the Lord's Providence one conſtant Tract of Kindneſs, bearing me in his Arms as an Eagle doth her Young, by all Means commending himſelf to me; becauſe he loved firſt, I am loved to the End. How ſhall I know a Father's Heart, but by his fatherly Dealing towards me? *John* xiii. 1.

24*thly*, I have by Obſervation found, that every Thing works for Good to me, the Lord doing Good to me by Sins, Deſertions, Tentations and

and Afflictions. The End hath been a Diſcovery of the Lord's Kindneſs in ſupporting and comforting me when troubled, and delivering me out of it, which hath drawn my Love and Confidence to him; by theſe hath he kept me waking, and tried, exerciſed, and increas'd any Good in me. All his Ways have I found Mercy and Truth, *Pſal.* xxv. 10. *Rom.* viii. 28.

25*thly*, I have ſeen Grace ſtamp'd on all my Mercies: As they come of Grace, ſo I am made to ſee them all flowing in this Chanel. 'Tis the Elect that are ſaved by Grace; the *Children of the Promiſe.*

26*thly*, When I have been ſeveral Times in Anguiſh of Spirit by reaſon of doubting of my Intereſt, the Lord Jeſus hath come and ſpoken to my Soul in the Goſpel, and told me he was reconciled to me; deſired me not to fear; that he would do all Things for me that I wanted; commanded me to believe; gave me Grounds and Reaſons for Believing; and overcame me, and made me believe. And hath he promiſed, and will he not fulfil it? My Hopes are built on the Promiſe of God; he *cannot deny himſelf.*

27*thly*, I remark a ſpecial Hand of God in all my Deliverances. In a Word, he lets none do me Good but himſelf; a Token that he is my Lord. Who is it that cares for the Children, and provides for the Wife, but the Husband and Father?

SECT.

SECT. VII.

Declaring ſome practical Conſiderations and Inſtructions which the Lord taught, and by which I attained to Settling and Peace as to my Intereſt in Chriſt, and thro' which Miſts, Doubts and Fears were driven away.

I Have been for a long Time after the Lord had indeed ſhown Kindneſs to me kept under by a Spirit of Bondage, thro' Fears and Doubts and Miſtakes, under which I have groaned for ſeveral Years after my firſt Converſion, thro' manifold Sins and Temptations; which did not only take away my Peace, but did me much Prejudice otherwiſe: But in Proceſs of Time the Lord did diſpel theſe Miſts and Fears, and by his Word and Spirit of Wiſdom made me ſee Things freely given me of God, eſtabliſhing my Heart: He diſcovered my Miſtakes, ſo as now I believe rather that I am converted, and my Way and Day is lightſom. The Means and Conſiderations were,

1. That there may be Grace in the Soul really, tho' it appear not glorioufly unto the Soul. *Our Life is hid in Chriſt*, Col. iii. 3. and *we know not what we ſhall be*, 1 John iii. 2. There is indeed a marvellous Glory in Grace and the Spirit of Holineſs, but it is ſullied with Corruption; and our Eyes are dim, and cannot ſee this Glory but darkly: This is the Ruſt and Droſs that is in and upon this glorious Metal. We are now *lying among the Pots; I am black*, ſaith the

the Spouſe. Our Graces diſcover themſelves by their Effects rather than by themſelves, as a little ſmothered Fire doth by the Smoke; hence, ſay not there is no Grace, becauſe ye ſee not the Glory of it.

2. The Lord made me conſider and know, that however, where there is one Grace, there are all Graces as to their Being; yet are not all Graces exerciſed when one is. The Exerciſe of one Grace, proceeding from Life, ſhews that all Graces are there, tho' the Life of Grace ſtream not nor vent itſelf in all Actions; and therefore, when we ſee Grace ſtopt one Way, it ordinarily breaks out in another. Love cannot delight in God when he is away, becauſe the Object of Delight muſt be preſent; but Love vents itſelf in Sorrow for want of, and ardent Deſires after, the beloved Object. I cannot get this and that done, ſaith the Soul; but Grace vents itſelf another Way, to wit, in Mourning and Self-lothing: And we ſee this frequently in Scripture, that that there is ordinarily but one Grace exerciſed, or two at one Time; ſeldom do we ſee the Ship with all her Sails up. Think not therefore the gracious Exerciſes of thy Spirit, *Deluſions* or *common Work*, when thou canſt not exerciſe all Graces.

3. That Grace and Corruption are not to be look'd upon in their Actings on the ſenſitive and paſſionate Faculties, ſo much as on the Mind and Will; for the Strength of Sin is there. *Rom.* vii. 21. *Paul* diſtinguiſhed the Law in his Members, and the Law of his Mind. I thought, and ſo do many ſtill, that Hardneſs of Heart was want of Horrours, great Fears and Terrors upon the Spirit;

Spirit; but, by looking into the Scriptures, I ſee it conſiſts more in the Rebellion of the Will and Underſtanding. *Mark* vi. 52. 'tis ſaid of the Diſciples, that *they did not believe, for their Hearts were hardned. Pharaoh*'s Hardneſs of Heart did conſiſt in the Diſobedience of his Will. Groſs Objects and Novelties have much Influence on the ſenſitive Faculties; therefore there is no Ground to fear, tho', 1*mo*, We cannot tear nor be tormented with Horrour for Sin; tho' we find not ſo paſſionate Deſires after God, and ſo ſenſible as we do feel in the Stomachs when we are hungry, or after an outward Object. 2*do*, See what may be the Cauſe why there is more Tenderneſs at firſt Converſion than afterwards. 3*tio*, Learn hence to judge of the Graciouſneſs of your Spirits by the Manner ye reſolve in, more than by the Executions of your Reſolutions: The Frame of the Heart in reſolving ſhould be more look'd unto, than in doing; for the outward Court is given unto the *Gentiles*. Look to your Eſtimations, Love, Deſires, Will, Purpoſes, rather than to any other Thing.

4. True Evangelical Repentance conſiſts rather in a ſweet Melting of Heart for Sin and Lothing and Forſaking of it, than in a fearful ſenſible Apprehenſion of Wrath and Horrour; for *perfect Love caſteth out Fear*. And the Humiliation which God requires is, to *break the Bands of Wickedneſs*, Iſa. lviii. 6. otherwiſe the Damned ſhould have moſt Repentance, 2 *Cor.* vii. 10. *Godly Sorrow worketh not Death*. Do not think thou wants Repentance, tho' thou want Horrour.

5. That the Spirit of Bondage and Horrours and Law-work did in themſelves produce evil Effects,

Effects, weakned the Hands, drove from the Lord, and were evil in themſelves, and contrary to the Commands of God, *Fear not, caſt out the Bond-woman*; contrary to Chriſt's Ends, *Theſe Things have I ſpoken that ye might have Peace*; contrary to Chriſt's Allowance, *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear*: And therefore deſire not a Law-work or Horrours, much leſs think not yourſelf not ſincere tho' ye want it and are kindly dealt with, but be rather thankful. It is true, the Lord by Accident doth Good by this legal Spirit. It is well diſtinguiſhed by one, who diſtinguiſhes betwixt the Event of a Thing, and the Effect of a Thing.

6. There may be Sincerity in the Heart, and Love to God, when the Lord heareth not Prayer, hides his Face, and frowns, afflicts and croſſes and ſmites in all the Labour of the Hand: We ſee, Saints complained of this before. The Father is ſtill a Father when he chaſtiſes, yea, will chaſtiſe becauſe he is a Father, *Amos* iii. 2. Be more holy, and pleaſe God, and he will be a Father to you. Theſe may be Trials; when thou therefore finds theſe Things, conclude not that the Lord is thine Enemy,

7. The Quality, and Nature, and Sincerity of Actions and Graces, are rather to be looked into than the Meaſure. Chriſt notices the Widow's Mite, and Cup of cold Water, and the Grain of Muſtard-ſeed. Conſider not then how much, as what: Grace and Mercy here, is but the Earneſt of Glory. You will not queſtion the Bargain becauſe of the Quantity of the Earneſt. *Be then* thankful and rejoice in little Mercies;

that

the Lord's People are a poor and needy People: Haſt thou Love, Faith, Humility, or Knowledge? Then queſtion not your State, tho' they run low.

8. By powerfully perſwading me that it is the Duty of all to believe on Chriſt, to come to him; yea, both good and bad, humbled and unhumbled, are to reſt on him. It is true, none will believe but humbled Sinners; and therefore are Miniſters bound to ſhew them their Miſery, that they may ſeek to the Phyſician: But it is the Duty of all to believe; it is a moral Duty that glorifies God, injoined to the ignorant *Jews*, Jo. vi. 28, 29. and the Wicked are damned for Want of this. And therefore, tho' I find not theſe Qualifications in me, I am not to ſtay away from Chriſt, but rather to come; for Chriſt as a Saviour is declared to ſave Sinners immediately. Tho' unhumbled, yet it is thy Duty to believe, as well as to ſanctify a Sabbath.

9. Evils, ſuch as Afflictions, Deſertions, Temptations, Sins, Plagues of Heart, tho' in themſelves they be Evil, yet are in their End and Deſtination from Love and for Good. The Phyſician doth not hate becauſe he makes the Patient ſick, nor doth the Parent abhor becauſe he correcteth. *Hag.* ii. 17. *Smiting in all the Labour of the Hands* is, that they may turn. *Hoſ.* v. 15. the Lord's leaving of a Land, and hiding of his Face, is, that they may acknowledge their Iniquities: The Rod is, *Iſa.* xxvii. 9. to *purge away Sin*. The Meſſenger indeed is hard-favoured and unpleaſant to behold, but he hath a Love-letter from God, and a ſweet Meſſage; God therefore may love me, tho' I be tryſted with theſe Evils.

10. Prayers

10. Prayers unanſwered are not a Sign of Hatred. God hears, accepts and loves the Prayer, which he preſently, to Senſe, directly anſwers not. *1mo*, The beloved People of God complained of this. *2do*, Unneceſſary and needleſs Petitions are only denied, ſuch as great Meaſures of Grace, extraordinary Raptures. *3tio*, We ask what is not good for us; God will not give a Knife to cut our Hands. *4to*, God never denies his People without a Reaſon, and ſometimes ſhews the Reaſon, 2 *Cor.* xii. 8, 9. *5to*, God anſwers materially and equivalently, tho' not in our Way, Fancy and Notion. *6to*, Chriſt's Anſwers are oftentimes myſterious, and we uptake them not; when he really anſwers, 'tis we that hear not, becauſe Chriſt opens his Mouth in dark Sayings. *7mo*, They are but ſuſpended and not rejected, and ſhall be anſwered. *8vo*, Thou art the better of Prayer, it is bleſſed to thee: What tho' thou get not what thou goeſt to Court for? yet the Lord gives thee what bears thy Charges coming and going, and bids thee come again. *9no*, Thou gets a Promiſe of Anſwer.

11. The Love of God to a Soul doth vent itſelf more in humbling, ſtrengthning and ſanctifying the Soul, than in comforting it with extraordinary Raptures: They are not the ſtrongeſt nor the beſt-beloved Chriſtians, whoſe Senſe is moſt indulged; *Bleſt are they who ſee not, and believe.* Believing *Mary* is prohibited to touch Chriſt, and unbelieving *Thomas* is commanded to put his Hands in his Side. I have ſeen ſome, that have had great Raptures of Joy, prove but ſtark Naught. The greateſt Mercy is Holineſs,

and

and Grace to honour him; if God beſtow that, doubt not of his Love, he will come again in Heaven, and vent his Love to thee.

12. The Love of God doth vent itſelf to a gracious Soul, not always in the Chanel which the Soul cuts out to it to run in; it vents itſelf under any Trouble, rather in ſupporting and comforting the Soul under Trouble, than in removing it. When the Buſh burns, the Lord's Love manifeſts itſelf, not in quenching the Fire altogether, but in keeping the Buſh unconſumed. Rejoice therefore, if comforted, ſupported and ſanctified under Trouble, tho' not delivered from it.

13. Our Happineſs, and Chriſt's Love to us doth appear and is more in the Promiſe, in himſelf, and by what he will give, than by what Saints have received or preſently feel. *Our Life is hid with Chriſt; and we know not what we ſhall be.* We have now but the Earneſt; *Ear hath not heard, Eye hath not ſeen what is prepared.* Here is Sorrow, Labour, Pain and Wants. Ye will never love Chriſt, nor rejoice in your Portion, if you look not above your Receivings, and to what you have in Heaven; *Fear not, it is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom.*

14. A gracious Frame doth not always laſt. True Grace as to the Being never periſhes, tho' as to the Diſpoſition and Exerciſe it may and doth. When the Lord hath viſited a Soul, and made the Heart tender, and ſhined upon it, and then drawn a Vail, and the Soul finding itſelf dead and heartleſs, it ſecretly thinketh all that it had formerly to be Deluſions, and ſo is unthank-

ful and diſcouraged; Why? becauſe it is periſhed, and ſo at beſt it is but common: But a Thing may remain in its Root *(his Seed abideth in him)* tho' the Leaves fall; yea, it muſt be ſo, that thou mighteſt repair to the Fountain, Chriſt, to fill thy empty Bottles in: See it in Saints; *All Fleſh is Graſs.* The Meat ye eat in the Morning will not ſerve at Night.

15. By conſidering that the Lord, and his Grace, Mercy and Truth, is the Ground of our Hope, Rejoicing and Glorying, our Life, our Light and Conſolation; he is *the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth,* 1 Cor. i. 31. Therefore our Sins or Shortcomings, Weakneſs, Blindneſs, ſhould not diſcourage us, or make us doubt of Heaven, or any Mercy; becauſe our Title is not founded on theſe, but on the Lord Jeſus himſelf, and our Hopes ſhould be proportioned to the Grounds of our Hope. *In the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength,* therefore is there never Ground of Doubting.

16. As Chriſt in the Days of his Fleſh, and Appearance in the World, was *growing* up *as a Plant out of a dry Ground,* and that his *Kingdom came not with Obſervation*; ſo may the Lord come quietly without Noiſe or Din into a Soul, and they not know it. It is a Miſtake to think, as many do, that when this Lord Jeſus and King of Glory ſhall come to the Soul, that Heaven ſhall be as it were opened, and ſome glorious Rapture, as the *Jews* did dream of his outward Coming: No; he may come to the Soul in a very poor and deſpicable Condition, and ordinarily he is in the ſtill ſmall Voice. Think not therefore

that

that Christ came not to thy Soul, because thou hast not seen him in Pomp and Glory.

17. The Lord's Dealings and Method with others are not our Rule. 'Tis a Cause of much Doubting and Disquietness, that Persons reading unattentively in Books the Lord's Way to others, hence they cut out this Chanel to themselves, and think, Thus and thus I must be dealt with, or else not at all, and hence seek; and if the Lord truly come, yet if not in their Model, they care not, believe not. 2 *Kings* v. 11. because the Prophet would not cure *Naaman* in the Way he proposed, he is offended. Let God tutor you. This is a *Limiting of the holy One*: The Lord may really come, and yet never in that Way thou chalks out to him.

18. By making me consider and seriously ponder, that there is Flesh and an unrenewed Part, which inclineth to all Evil, and leadeth captive to Death, as well as there is a new Man: And hence be not disquieted, as many are, tho' ye find Carnality, Pride, and Opposition to every good Way; if thou find a renewed Part fighting against this, lothing thyself for, and mourning under this; but cast the Saddle on the right Horse; attribute all thy Evil to the Flesh, and thy Good to the Spirit.

19. Times should be distinguished. If in Winter ye see neither Leaves nor Fruit on Trees, ye wonder not: This is a Winter, a Day of Famine; and therefore, tho' the Lord never wholly leave his People, yet are there certain Seasons when all the Saints Life and Glory may be in the Root; this is a Day of Famine, and of Wrath

and Deſolation: The Righteous *bring forth Fruit in their Seaſon.*

20. Faith is the moſt profitable Duty to ourſelves, moſt pleaſing to God; and on the contrary I have found Unbelief moſt hateful and diſhonourable to God, and moſt prejudicial to myſelf, and therefore by all Means to be ſhunned.

21. Neither Books, nor Providences, nor Suggeſtions are our Rule to judge ourſelves by, nor to be credited abſolutely; but the Scripture is our Rule, and we are to judge of all Things by it, and to ſtand and fall to this Maſter: And every Spirit, Suggeſtion and Apprehenſion, ere it be admitted, is to be tried by Scripture; and if according to the Scripture ye be found ſincere, then let Books, Suggeſtions and all ſay what they will. And truly moſt Mens Fears and Doubts proceed from miſtaken Marks given in Books, or dumb Suggeſtions: I think; but ſaith the Scripture ſo? *Iſa.* viii. 20.

22. Look not ſo much on the Beginning of a Chriſtian's Life or Exerciſe, as to the End; God's Dealings begin with Tragedies, and end in Comedies: The Lord will *do thee Good in thy latter End; The latter End of that Man is Peace.*

SECT. VIII.

Containing general and ſpecial Rules for ordering my Speech, Behaviour and Practice.

THE Lord's People walk by Rule; their Life is fitly compared, *Heb.* xii. 1. to a Race: And I have therefore thought upon ſome general Rules to be obſerved as the Foundation of all true Religion. § 1.

§ 1. *General Rules.*

1*ſt Rule.* Labour to know and find out wherein a Man's chief Happineſs doth conſiſt: Have an End to follow; till a Man intend right, he can never have a right Motion. Fix the Heart in the Belief of this, that the Enjoyment of God in Chriſt is our Happineſs; and make the Heart to cloſe with this. Alas! the moſt of us walk at Random, like Beaſts, without an End. This is the Foundation of all, *John* xvii. 3. *'Tis Life eternal to know God, and whom he hath ſent.*

2*d Rule.* It will much contribute to our Motion in the Way, to be armed with a ſtrong and deliberate Reſolution to walk in ſuch Ways; this will determine us, *Pſal.* cxix. 106, 111. *I have choſen thy Precepts as mine Heritage for ever. I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will obſerve all thy righteous Judgments.* Conſider and weigh the Advantages and Diſadvantages of Religion, and then thorowly determine and bind thyſelf with the ſtrongeſt Engagements; be poſitive, not halting.

3*d Rule.* Labour to have and keep right, ſound, orthodox and charitable Thoughts of God: Fix a lovely Character of God in thy Heart, ſuch as, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. Fix the Faith of God's Attributes, ſtudy this moſt; *This is Life eternal.* Rom. x. 14. *How ſhall they call on him whom they have not known?* 'Tis a ſuperſtitious unprofitable Worſhip that is not to the true God.

4*th Rule.* Be always in Duty; Racers muſt keep the Gate: Never be idle. As there is an End, ſo there is a Way; never ſit ſtill. Lay it as a Foundation, to be always in Duty; never to

quit that, whatever be, 1 *Cor.* xv. 58. *Always abounding in the Work of the Lord.* Job xvii. 9. *The Righteous holdeth on in his Way.* We by Idleneſs loſe much; we are employed in ſuch a Work as we muſt not ſuffer to grow cold. Oh our Interruptions do us much Prejudice! Little and litt'e makes good Speed at laſt.

5th Rule. Walk by Faith, and not by Senſe; that is, make the Scriptures thy Rule; think, love, judge and do according to this. Examine all Things: As a Man hath an End and Way, ſo hath he a Rule to direct him; this is the Scriptures, 2 *Cor.* v. 7. *Deut.* iv. 1, 2. and vi. 1, 2. Reject all other Guides but this.

6th Rule. Believe always, and never deſpair; keep the Heart up. Whatever come, loſe not your Confidence; never ſink by Diſcouragement, hoping always ſtedfaſtly unto the End. *Truſt in him at all Times, ye People.* Heb. iii. 6. *Hold faſt your Confidence ſtedfaſt unto the End.* No Ground ever for Deſpair, the Ground of Faith remains alway: Therefore never loſe your Hope; *'Tis good for a Man to hope,* Lam. iii. 26. Iſa. xxvi. 4.

7th Rule. Live near the Lord always; that which is expreſt in Scripture by *walking with God, ſetting him always at our Right-hand.* Let Heart, Thoughts and Affections retain ever ſome Impreſſions of his Preſence; fear always: Keep yourſelves in the Love of God; if departed, return again; if returned, keep with him. All Good is with God, and all Ill comes from his Abſence and Diſtance; *Wo unto them when I leave them.* Loſe not your Guide by any Means; he is *all Things*, Life, Light, Strength and Health:

Health: Ye cannot be without this, *Hoſ.* xii. 6. *Wait continually on thy God.* Pſal. xvi. 8. Gen. xvii. 1. John xv. 4, 5, 6. *Without me ye can do nothing.* Pſal. lxxiii. 28. *'Tis good for me to draw near to God.*

8*th Rule.* Be always humble; never murmure; be always vile in thine own Eyes; juſtify the Lord always; ſubmit to every Diſpenſation; let never your Spirits be rankled or fired, *Micah* vi. 8. *Walk humbly with thy God.*

9*th Rule.* Keep your Spirits ſober and in Health; if ſick and diſtempered, ye cannot travel: Not drunken with the *Cares of this World*, Luke xii. 45. Be not lifted up with Pride or Paſſion; he whoſe Spirit is lifted up within him, is not right. Keep your Spirits in an equal Balance, 1 *Pet.* v. 8. *Be ſober*; ſuffer not your Paſſions to run to Exceſs: Sober in weeping, rejoicing, ſpeaking, doing, fearing, *Phil.* iv. 5. 1 *Cor.* vii. 30. Be always Maſter of thyſelf; unſhaken.

10*th Rule.* Study Temperance, this is objective Sobriety; Temperance in Meat, Drink, Sleep and Recreations. Shun Exceſs, by which the Spirits are indiſpoſed. The Heathen call Temperance the Ground-work and Foundation of all Virtue. 2 *Pet.* i. 5, 6. *Prov.* xxiii. 20. Racers muſt be dieted and temperate, 1 *Cor.* ix. 25. *He that warreth muſt be temperate in all Things.* Surfeiting is forbidden, *Luke* xxi. 34.

11*th Rule.* Beware of Worldly-mindedneſs, and being too much engaged in the World; *He that warreth doth not entangle himſelf in the Affairs of this Life*, 2 Tim. ii. 4. Have as little ado in the World as ye can; take no more in Hand than ye are well able to maſter: If en-

gaged, flee as a Bird out of the Snare, and put thy Houſe in Order, but put the World out of thy Heart eſpecially; *No Man can ſerve two Maſters.*

12*th Rule.* Be watchful: Beware of a Spirit of Slumber, ſtand always on your Guard; *Watch in all Things*, as the Apoſtle commanded *Timothy. Bleſſed is the Man that feareth always.* Be always ſuſpicious, *Prov.* xxviii. 14. Never turn ſecure or careleſs; remember your Adverſary is ſtill buſy, and his Snares are continually ſet: *Be vigilant* therefore, 1 *Pet.* v. 8. Keep your Eyes always open; look and ponder every Thing, be not raſh or haſty.

13*th Rule.* Be diligent in the Means both publick and private; in Hearing, Meditation, Chriſtian Conference, ejaculatory Prayer, Reading; eſpecially private Prayer, a Man cannot be a Chriſtian without this. Ye cannot work or travel, unleſs ye eat, *Prov.* x. 4. *The Hand of the Diligent maketh rich.*

14*th Rule.* Look upon Sin as the greateſt Evil, and never to be done; whatever ye do, ſhun Sin, and ſhun Tentations to Evil as well as Evil itſelf.

§ 2. *Rules I daily follow in my daily Walk: Or, ſome ſpecial Rules for ordering my own particular Converſation.*

1*ſt particular Rule.* In Imitation of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and to get Good done, I purpoſe to riſe timely every Morning, *Job* i. 5. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 15.

2*d Rule.* To propoſe, when I am up, ſome Work

Work to be done, or the Work of the Day, and how and when to do it, and to engage my Heart to it, 1 *Tim.* iv. 7. and at Even to call myſelf to Account, and to mourn for Failings.

3*d Rule.* To ſpend a competent Portion of Time every Day in Prayer, Reading, Meditating, ſpiritual Exerciſes, Morning, Mid-day, Evening, and ere I go to Bed.

4*th Rule.* Once in the Month, either the End or Middle of it, I keep a Day of Humiliation for the publick Condition, for the Lord's People and their ſad Condition, for the raiſing up the Work and People of God.

5*th Rule.* I ſpend, by and attour this, one for my own private Condition, in conflicting with ſpiritual Evils, and to get my Heart more holy, or to get ſome ſpecial Exerciſe throughed, once in ſix Weeks.

6*th Rule.* I ſpend every Week once, four Hours over and above my daily Portion in private for ſome ſpecial Cauſes relating either to myſelf or others, relating either to temporal or civil Affairs.

7*th Rule.* To ſpend ſome Time on *Saturday* towards Night for Preparation to the Sabbath.

8*th Rule.* To ſpend ſix or ſeven Days together once in a Year, when I have greateſt Conveniency, wholly and only on ſpiritual Accounts.

9*th Rule.* My ordinary and extraordinary Works, which every Day I ſtrive to finiſh, are, to mortify Sin, to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of the Lord, to glorify God, to inſtruct others and do them Good, to attend on and walk cloſely with the Lord: This I propoſe every Day to myſelf to do and finiſh, and at Even do examine

myſelf

over us? As there is Eating without Fear, ſo there is Speaking without Fear.

11th Rule. Let not your Neighbour's Faults be the Subject of your Talk, tho' it be true. *Who backbiteth not,* Pſal. xv. 3. Shew thy Neighbour his Faults.

12th Rule. Speak not of thyſelf or Worth; *Let another praiſe thee, and not thine own Mouth,* neither directly nor indirectly: Let thy Works praiſe thee. 'Tis an ordinary Thing for a proud Heart to hunt for Eſtimation from others to itſelf, by telling its own Acts or Reſolutions. I have added theſe laſt two, becauſe Profeſſors ordinarily miſcarry in theſe.

§ 4. *Rules in our Actions.*

I ſhall comprehend in this both Civil and Religious Actions; Actions would not only be good as to their Matter, but as to their Manner.

1ſt Rule. Do nothing without Foreſight; let thine Eye of Knowledge guide thee continually in the Way thou art to walk in. *Lam.* iii. 40. firſt *ſearch and try your Ways,* then *turn. Ponder the Path of thy Feet.* Do all Things as a Man, and by Rule, *Prov.* iv. 26. ſo ſhalt thou have Peace.

2d Rule. Whatever thou do, do it ſpiritually as the Lord's Work; as to him, becauſe commanded by him, *Eph.* vi. 6, 7, 8. *Col.* iii. 23.

3d Rule. Labour for Spirituality in your outward Deportments, as well as in your Hearts, in a grave, wiſe, ſober and humble Carriage. *Be holy in all Manner of Converſation,* 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. Let *Holineſs* be on *Bells, Pots, Bridles* and *Horſes,* Zech. xiv. 20, 21. Have on the Wedding-garment.

4th Rule.

4th Rule. In Midſt of Buſineſs look up ever and anon to Heaven by ejaculatory Prayer, to preſerve the Soul from Corruption; and keep Divine Impreſſions, that they die not out, *Eph.* vi. 18. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 17.

5th Rule. Whatever thou doſt, depend on the Lord; do nothing without him, but *in all thy Ways acknowledge him,* Prov. iii. 6. *Iſa.* xxx. 2. Pſal. xxxvii. 5. *Neh.* ii. 4. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 45.

6th Rule. Whatever ye do, *do it with all thine Heart,* i. e. quickly without Delay, and heartily, doing what thou doſt only, and nothing elſe, *Eccl.* ix. 10.

7th Rule. Whatever ye do, do it in *Faith, without* which *'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God*; in Faith of the Lawfulneſs of it, in Faith of God's Aſſiſtance and Acceptance: Elſe, doubting, ye are damned, *Rom.* xiv. 22, 23. *Heb.* xi. 6, 7. Do nothing without or againſt Conſcience.

8th Rule. Be ſober in what ye do: Eat, Drink, Marry and Buy, as tho' ye did it not, in an holy Indifferency, referring the Event to God, 1 *Cor.* vii. 29, 30, 31. Be not fretted with Cares, lay not out too much Affections or Heart with your Actions; but *let your Moderation be known to all Men, the Lord is at Hand,* Philip. iv. 5.

9th Rule. Reſt not in Actions, but ſeek the End of an Action, *Matth.* vi. 16. Reſt not in Prayer, but labour to attain the End of Prayer by Meditation and Prayer. Be not like Children ſhooting at Random without a Mark.

10th Rule. Bound your Actions with your Callings: Fight, but not out of your Station, 1 *Cor.* vii. 24. *Let every Man wherein he is called,*

led, walk with God. 1 Theſſ. iv. 11. 1 Tim. v. 13. Doing your own Buſineſs.

§ 5. *Rules for our Converſation.*

1*ſt Rule.* Mark the Frame of your Heart, and your Carriage, immediately after you have been near God; and ſee what Deportment ye are then inclined to follow, and ſtudy that always.

2*d Rule.* Follow that kind of Converſation wherein ye have moſt Peace after ſerious Reflections on your Ways: I think, little Peace ſhall be found in a light, furious, carnal Converſation.

3*d Rule.* Look to the Carriage of Chriſt, his Apoſtles and Prophets, and ſtudy that Converſation that ye think was Chriſt's or the Apoſtles; this was not a laughing, frothy, vain, light Converſation. When therefore thou art examining ſuch a Carriage, ask, Would Chriſt have done this? would this ſet *Paul* to do? 1 *Cor.* xi. 1. & iv 17. *Matth.* xi. 29, 30.

4*th Rule.* Study that Converſation which is moſt agreeable and ſuitable to your Profeſſion, Goſpel, Eſtate and Station, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 12. Walk *as becometh the Goſpel*, ſuitably to the Providences ye are tryſted with, *James* v. 13. and to the Perſons ye have to do with.

5*th Rule.* Walk not outwardly mournfully, before the Wicked who may be ready to make Sport of thy Sadneſs, nor before theſe who may be diſcouraged. Shun carnal Mirth, *Micah* i. 10. 2 *Sam.* i. 20.

6*th Rule.* Study that Converſation which is moſt edifying, moſt convincing and condemning of the Wicked, 1 *Pet.* i. 14, 15. and likeſt to glorify God and the Goſpel, *Col.* iv. 6.

7*th Rule.*

7th Rule. A grave ſerious Converſation, mixt with Serenity, is a good Converſation; and this is like Chriſt, this is ſuitable to our great Work and Aims. Let the mad Children of the World trifle and play, we are called to Seriouſneſs, 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. *Tit.* ii. 2.

8th Rule. Be circumſpect in your Converſation, and wiſe, eſpecially *towards them that are without*, Eph. v. 15. Eccl. ii. 14. Keep up the Chriſtian Decorum: Let nothing eſcape thee but what is befitting the Majeſty of a Chriſtian; labour, not to diſparage that at all. Walk worthy of your Calling.

9th Rule. Walk ſoberly in Apparel, 1 *Pet.* iii. 3. ſober in Paſſions, ſober in Expreſſions; do nothing violently or paſſionately, keeping Paſſions within Bounds: Walk with a ſober Pace, not *tinkling with your Feet.*

10th Rule. Walk kindly, lovingly and courteouſly; be ready to ſerve all: A tart rigid Carriage is not good; *The Son of Man came eating and drinking.* Acts xxvii. 3. & xxviii. 2, 7. Stoiciſm is not Chriſtianity. Thro' thy Gravity and Holineſs let Love appear; receive all; *become all Things to all Men*, except with Apoſtates and open Enemies; yea, let your Reproofs be in Love, *Lev.* xix. 17.

SECT. IX.

Declaring ſuch Things as, thro' the Lord's Bleſſing, have done me Good.

I Cannot deny but the Lord hath ſhown me Kindneſs, and done me Good, and that a little one hath become a great Nation; and that

that, however *I am poor and needy*, yet *the Lord remembers me*: And, notwithſtanding *I came over this* Jordan *with my Staff*, yet now *am I* by the Lord's Bleſſing *become two Bands*. But, whatever Good it be that the Lord hath ſhewn me, for the Benefit of others, and Confirmation of myſelf; I have thought fit to ſhew and ſet down theſe Things, which in my Experience, thro' the Lord's Bleſſing, I have found to be moſt helpful unto me, in furthering me in the Ways of Holineſs, Peace and Fellowſhip with God. And I have found theſe twenty ſeven Things eſpecially concur, and bleſt for doing me Good;

1. The Society of Saints: When they have been full in communicating their Caſes, they have encouraged me, my Griefs have been eaſed by them; I have by their godly Converſation been provoked to good Works; I have been kept in Life by them, recovered out of Decays by them, enlightned and edified by them, *Eccl.* iv. 4, 9, 10, 11. 1 *Cor.* xii. 7. *Heb.* x. 24, 25. *Prov.* xxvii. 17. *Iron ſharpneth Iron.*

2. I have found much Profit by obſerving the Lord's Providences, by ſearching into God's Ends in Diſpenſations, whether Good or Evil; this hath made me ſee much Love in Things, freed my Judgment from Confuſions, and made me know my Duty. *Mic.* vi. 9. *Hoſ.* xiv. 10. *Pſal.* cvii. 43. *Jer.* viii. 7. *Gen.* xxv. 22. *Exod.* iii. 3, 4.

3. I have found Meditation on the Attributes of God to do me much Good, eſpecially his Love, Power, Sovereignty and Holineſs, *Job* xxii. 21. *John* xvii. 3. for thereby have I been made conform to his Image, and my Love, Fear

and

and Faith have been begotten and increas'd; *Pſal.* ix. 10. *Eph.* iii. 18, 19.

4. I have found much Good by a long and ſerious Study and Pondering of the Covenant of Grace; the Freedom, Fulneſs and Unchangeableneſs thereof; the Condition (Faith) and Nature thereof: By Meditation on the Goſpel, Goſpel-promiſes, Offers and Invitations; this hath ſtrengthned and ſanctified me, given me more Knowledge of Chriſt and of his Ways than any Thing that ever I was exerciſed in. I have found it indeed the *Miniſtration of Life*, Gal. iii. 2. Heb. xi. *throughout*. Rom. i. 16, 17.

5. I have found the Lord confining me at Home, in not calling me Abroad; ordinarily this hath been a gathering Time, and never ordinarily better than when alone: Abſtraction and Solitude hath done me Good, *Prov.* xviii. 1. *Numb.* vi. 2, 3. *Hoſ.* ii. 14. God hath oftentimes viſited me in a ſolitary Wilderneſs.

6. I have found outward Afflictions and hard Meaſure from the World doing me Good, humbling my Soul, mortifying me to the World, making Chriſt and his Conſolations ſweet, whom before I cared not much for: I found it good to bear the Yoke in my Youth; I have thereby learned Dependence on God, and have had much Experience of his Love in ſupporting me under Afflictions, ſanctifying them to me, and delivering me out of them, *Lam.* iii. 27. *Pſal.* xciv. 12. *Heb.* xii. 11. *Pſal.* cxix. 67, 71. *Prov.* xxix. 15. *Hoſ.* v. 15.

7. I have found Quietneſs in Spirit, Moderation and Calmneſs in ſpeaking, and Adviſedneſs doing me Good; and, while thus in Silence I

to his Writings, as much and more than to any Mean whatſomever, for wakning, ſtrengthning and enlightning of my Soul; the Lord made him a Well of Water to me in all my Wilderneſs-ſtraits.

16. I have found it good to put a good Conſtruction on the Lord's Ways, when they have been outwardly very ſad, *Exod.* xx. 19.

17. I have found much Good by ſpeaking to the Praiſe and Commendation of God: When many Times not ſo affectionately, yet ſincerely out of the Senſe of Duty, I have begun to praiſe him to others, I have found my Tongue to have affected my Heart, *James* iii. 2. *Pſal.* cv. 3. & cxlv. 5, 6, 11. The Lord hath ſenſibly rewarded me for this.

18. I have found much Good by ſore and long inward Tentations, being *poured from Veſſel to Veſſel*, changing and being changed, lifted up and caſten down; the greateſt Settlement is by theſe. *Iſa.* xxxviii. 16. *By theſe* (ſaith *Hezekiah*) *ſhall Men live.* Theſe humbled me, and kept me waking and ever crying to the Lord; and have given me much Experience of the Lord's Kindneſs, and acquainted me with the Exerciſe of Saints in the Scripture, *James* i. 2.

19. Reſiſting of ſtrong Tentations, and engaging with difficult Duties, and coming over the Belly of Indiſpoſitions within, Loſs and Contempt from the World without, and ſo taking up the Croſs; the Lord hath ſignally owned me in theſe, and the Fruits of them have been very great; ſuch as, praying under Indiſpoſitions, reproving of Acquaintances, forſaking of Ways and Thoughts very pleaſing to the Fleſh, *Jer.*

ii.

xi. 1, 2. *Heb.* xi. 6. *Rom.* ii. 7. *Mat.* v. 10; & xvi. 24.

20. I have found much Good by ſtudying and exerciſing the Duty of Humility and Submiſſion, *James* iv. 7. Duties are eaſy to an humble Spirit; it eaſes the Soul of Diſquietments, and makes Burdens eaſy. Hell is not Hell to an humble Soul, ſaith *Shepherd.* I have ever found Help when humbled.

21. The calling to Mind and ſeriouſly meditating on the Lord's Dealings with me as to Soul and Body, his manifold Mercies, has done me very much Good, cleared my Caſe, confirmed my Soul of God's Love and my Intereſt in him, and made me love him. O what Good hath the Writing of this Book done me! and what Wells of Water have mine Eyes been opened to ſee, which before were hid! *Pſal.* cvii. 4. & xviii. 1, 2. Scarce any Thing hath done me more Good.

22. Making and renewing of Vows and Covenants with God, tho' gone about in much Weakneſs, and but weakly performed, yet hath it begotten Life, and kindly Thoughts of God, and hath been a Mean to recover me out of Decay, and to keep from further backſliding, *Deut.* xxix. 12, 13.

23. Meditation on the moſt common Truths and general hath done me Good, ſuch as Death, Heaven, Judgment, Sin, God's Being and Providence, Man's Fall, and Chriſt's Death, *&c.*

24. Speedy going about Duties, without trifling or delaying. A Duty done in Time is worth twice ſo much delayed.

25. By writing on Points of Divinity; as, on the Scriptures, on God's Attributes, on Chriſtian

ſtian Duties, Sermons, Caſes, and the like; theſe, like freſh Water, have kept my Heart.

26. Serious and deliberate Self-examination, and, while thus exerciſed, trying myſelf, looking to the Qualifications of Saints and Hypocrites in Scripture, their Sins and Failings; ſtudying the Nature of true ſaving Grace, the Difference, according to the Scriptures, betwixt falſe and true Grace; this hath contributed much to my Settlement.

27. I have found much Good by being abſtracted from meddling in temporal or civil Buſineſs: That I had not great meddling in Affairs in the Beginning of my Chriſtian Courſe; partly that others did not employ me, but took all to their own Hand; partly that I was indifferent, and had no Heart while I had ſo great Things ado in Reference to my Soul. And altho' my Affairs called for Diligence, yet do I not now repent it; for I thereby got my Heart wholly taken up with my Soul's Condition, and had no Divertiſement, *Prov.* xviii. 1.

SECT. X.

Declaring ſuch Things as have done me evil.

1. A Legal Spirit. When *Satan* preſſes Duties violently and boaſtingly, with Thunder and Lightning overdriving me, laying more upon me than I am able to bear, putting new Wine in old Bottles, ſeeking ſuch and ſuch Duties and ſo much, exacting them by Weight and Meaſure: This weakens my Hands, irritates me, makes me do nothing, ſeeing I cannot get what is injoined done; makes me act ſlaviſhly, *Gen.* xxxiii. 13. *Rom.* vii. 11. *Heb.* x. 12, 13. *Luke* xix. 21.

2. The

2. The Society of carnal unregenerate People, and graceleſs formal Profeſſors, eſpecially if familiar with them, and not living very abſtract and at Diſtance from them, or not teſtifying againſt them or inſtructing them. They have, when near, diſperſed their Poiſon and Infection, and turned my Heart carnal; like ſome Sickneſſes, if ye ly not near the Perſons that have them, they ſmite not, 1 *Cor.* xv. 33. *Evil Communication corrupteth good Manners.*

3. I have found the Society of the Godly hurtful, and drawing my Heart from God, and rendering it carnal, when it hath not been ſpiritually improven; when the Lord hath not been ſought to by mutual Prayer, and no ſpiritual Conference; and when I have ſtayed too long with them at once, *Heb.* iii. 13. When there is no exhorting one another, there is hardning.

4. I have had my Spirit turned out of Frame, and quite diſtempered, by loud, violent, haſty and much Talk, tho' of good Purpoſes. I have found *the Talking of the Lips tend to Penury*, and *a Breach* made *in the Spirit* (as ſaith the wiſe Man) by *perverſe ſpeaking*, Jam. iii. 5, 6. *Prov.* xvii. 27. *Mat.* xv. 8.

5. I have found publick Occaſions and going oft from Home hurtful, and theſe like the Devil's Market-days: Let me prepare and pray as I will, yea, and watch, my Spirit hath thereby been diſtracted and diſtempered, eſpecially if I have gone on ſlight Calls. Riding here and there is good neither for Soul nor Body.

6. I have found Intemperance, and Exceſs in the Uſe of Meat, Drink and other Recreations, very prejudicial, and to be the ordinary Inlet of

many Evils; for, the Body thereby being diſtempered, the Spirit hath been utterly indiſpoſed to any good Exerciſe, *Luke* xxi. 34. *Prov.* xxv. 27. and xxiii. 20, 21.

7. Omiſſion of Duties in private, or ſlight Performance of them; when I have begun to be more remiſs in ſuch gracious Exerciſes of Prayers, Examination, Meditation and Reading, *Mat.* xxvi. 41. *Prov.* xxiii. 21.

8. Neglect of ejaculatory Prayer, when converſing with others; for this is the Fountain of Waters that drops from Heaven, and makes the Heart fruitful, *Mat.* xxvi. 41.

9. Impertinent vain Thoughts in the Morning, and when riding, and when in private religious Exerciſes; tho' materially good, I have found theſe to diſtemper my Spirit as much as any Thing, and to render me utterly unfit for Duty, *Jer.* iv. 14.

10. Unwatchfulneſs and Heart-ſecurity while in the World, not being *in the Fear of God all the Day long*, not keeping Guard, or neglecting the continual Overſight of my Heart, Tongue and Actions, but growing careleſs. I have found my Heart unwatched to run away, and engage in Sins and Tentations: Many Diſorders in the City while there is no Government, *Mat.* xxvi. 41. This hath done Evil exceedingly; thro' this I loſe in publick what I gain in private.

11. Unbelieving Diſcouragements ariſing from Senſe of Wants, Sins, Deſertions and Tentations; theſe have weakned my Hands, 1 *Sam.* xii. 20. *Lam.* i. 9. *Jer.* ii. 28. *Heb.* xii. 12, 13. When *Peter* did fear, then did he begin to ſink.

12.

12. Great Engagements in Civil Affairs and Buſineſs, and eager Proſecution of them; theſe have diſtracted me, and made me utterly unſerviceable to God, *Luke* x. 4. and xxi. 34.

13. Pride, and conceiting much of myſelf, boaſting of myſelf, ſeeking the Praiſe of Men, and by a careful Performance of Duties ſeeking to exalt myſelf, and to ſhare with Chriſt in the Matter of Salvation; this hath made the Lord reject me many Times, withdrawing me from my Reſolution, to *hide Pride*, Rom. ix. 31, 32. This made the *Jews* miſs of Righteouſneſs, becauſe they ſought it *as it were by the Works of the Law*.

14. Sloth in long Sleeping, and trifling the Time; this hath *clothed me with Rags*, eſpecially in Company.

SECT. XI.

Declaring ſome of Satan's *ſpiritual and more ſubtile Devices, whereby the Work of Sanctification hath been much hindered*, 2 Cor. ii. 11.

1. IN making me think the Eſſence of true Repentance to conſiſt in Contrition for Sin, more than in turning in Heart and Practice from it; whereby it hath come to paſs, that not finding myſelf in a mourning ſorrowful Frame, but ſtraitned in my Affections, I have not turned from Sin, but was ſtill taken up in drawing out my ſenſible Sorrow for it, as thinking there was no true Repentance without this; and, when I mourned, have reſted in this, as if this were ſufficient: Whereas Repentance doth chiefly conſiſt in turning to God, and Mourning

is but the Manner and Qualification of this Act of *Turning*, *Joel* ii. 12. *Turn with Mourning.* Iſa. lviii 6. *The Faſt* God hath *choſen*, is, *breaking the Bands of Wickedneſs.* Prov. xxi. 3.

2. After Falls and Slips and ordinary Departures, *Satan* has ſought to aſtoniſh me with my Fall, and to amaze and confuſe me ſo with what I had done, as thereby I was kept from getting up to my Feet, and going forwards; like thoſe that running a Race catch a Fall, and are therewith ſo perplexed, thinking what to do, that in the mean Time they loſe much Time, and are far behind. The beſt Way were to get up, and conſider our Ways, mourn, ſeek Pardon, and then go to Work; ſo was it with *Joſhua*, Chap. vii. 10. viz. *Joſhua*, after the ſmiting of *Iſrael*, lies complaining; the Lord ſaith thus, *Wherefore lieſt thou thus?* up to thy Work. *Gen.* xlii. 1. and xliii. 10. *Why look ye upon one another?* When *David* ſinned, he immediately falls to Repentance; *I have ſinned*, yet now, Lord, forgive. It muſt, when all is done, turn and end in this. So in *Job* xxxiv. 32. *If thou haſt done wickedly*, what is done cannot be helped, *do ſo no more.* He doth not ſay, Amaze and diſtract yourſelves with Cares; for, *Who can by thinking add one Cubit to his Stature?*

3. In making me think that becauſe I come not up the full Length of Duty, or to do it in that Manner and Form that is required, that better omit it than do it in ſuch a ſinful Manner; whereby it hath come to paſs that nothing hath been done at all, God not honoured, and others not profited; not conſidering that doing the Duty as we may, is a Mean to the better doing of

it,

it, as Scribling is to good Writing. Humility will not ſtand on ſuch Niceties; the Lord pardons Imperfections: Hence the Duty of Reproof hath been omitted, becauſe I could not do it ſo freely, evangelically and plainly as the Lord requires, thinking that ſo doing of it was an Abomination; this is Over-driving: But it is better paying what we may, than let all run on our Head. 2 *Sam.* vi. 7, 8, 9, 10. when *David* ſaw what Reverence was required to the Ark, he let it alone; *Who can ſtand?* Unbelief whereby the Soul thinks God ſuch a hard Maſter that will exact to the uttermoſt, and Pride in diſdaining to do any Thing but what may be worthy or meritorious, are the Cauſes of this Deceit.

4. By the injecting of Thoughts materially good, yet impertinent to the Exerciſe the Soul for the preſent is called unto, whereby my Purpoſe hath been broken, my Spirit made vain, no Good done, nor Peace in it: And when other palpably ſinful Thoughts have been extruded, theſe real Enemies, yet ſeeming Friends, have been let in, becauſe of their *Sheep's Clothing*; and it is but the Devil transforming himſelf into an *Angel of Light*, 2 Cor. xi. 14. The Righteous *bringeth forth Fruit in Seaſon*; theſe Thoughts are vain, becauſe fruitleſs and unſeaſonable.

5. In doing of Duties, and not ſeeking to attain the End of Duties; not becauſe I thought this worthy, but I thought it ſufficient if the Lord was honoured: And in this Snare I am ordinarily intrapped, tho' beaten out of Formality; and this hath rendred the Means uſeleſs to me, and *ever learning*, and *never coming to the Knowledge*

ledge of the Truth. I have been like Children, who with their little Bows ſhoot, but at no Mark, but that they may ſhoot; or as when they ſet their Paper-boats to Sea, but look for nothing elſe than to ſee them ſwim upon the Waters; and ſo it may be ſaid of them, *There is no End of their Labour.* And hence I have exhorted, not to convert or edify, but becauſe commanded, and to ſhew Obedience, and ſometimes to render inexcuſable; and thus have waited on the Lord in private and publick Means, not for ſupplying of Wants or drawing near unto God, but merely to do Homage unto him: Whereby there is a ſtanding ſtill, and no Progreſs; Duties rendred a Burden, becauſe no End to draw to, or no End intended; and my Motion irregular, becauſe no End to direct; And ſo have wrought at Random.

6. Under the Pretence of waiting on the Lord for Strength, I have been driven to gaze, and neglect the Duty itſelf, when there hath been an Opportunity; ſo, in preparing for Prayer, have neglected Prayer: In looking for Strength and Grace to edify when in Company, nothing hath been done; and Strength received, not improven. *Acts* i. 11. *Why ſtand ye gazing?* go to your Work, to *Jeruſalem.* *Mat.* xx. 6. *Jer.* xiii. 16. *Give Glory to the Lord*; leſt, looking for Light, Darkneſs come.

7. To neglect the Practice of Grace and Duty, by reſting in the ſweet and reliſhing Speculation thereof, and Reſolution to do it; I have been taken up with the Sweetneſs of Duty on the Mind, but not ſo careful to practiſe it, tho' there have been ſome ſlight Reſolutions. This I thought ſuf-

ſufficient, or elſe thro' Security I have not expected Difficulty in the Practice; and ſo, knowing and approving and teaching others the Law, yet neglecting it, they *ſay and do not*, Rom. ii. 13, 14, 18. *Mat.* vii. 21. *Jer.* ii. 19, 20. So that the End of theſe Speculations hath not been ſo much to practiſe, as to reliſh and delight the Underſtanding in expatiating on ſuch Subjects.

8. I have been much hindered from Duty, by ſtudying the Manner of Duty, rather than the Subſtance of it; by ſtudying Faith in Prayer, rather than Prayer in Faith; by ſtudying Openneſs and Plain-dealing in reproving, rather than Reproof itſelf; by ſtudying Conſtancy in watching, rather than watching itſelf: Which I have found to proceed from Pride, chooſing the Excellency of it rather than the Thing itſelf; and from *Satan*'s perſwading me that all Commands are but the Lord's ſeeking Ground of Quarrel to caſt out with me, and therefore not only ſeeks Duties, but that they be done after ſuch a Manner as thou knoweſt thou cannot get done; that ſo, when he cannot condemn for the Matter, he ſhall be ſure for the Manner to find Fault: Whereby my Mind hath been ſo taken up with the circumſtantial, and perfect and exact Qualifications of Duties, that the Matter and Subſtance of it hath been neglected. I have made the Manner of it the Matter.

9. *Satan* with my Fooliſhneſs, tyrannically yet ſubtilly, preſſes the doing of many Things at once, which is impoſſible; that ſo, dividing my Spirit with ſeveral Objects, nothing may be well done, and all ſlighted: So that when I came to ſay, What have I ado? it is anſwered, Ye have this

this and that and the other Thing; when I am called to one Thing, I addreſs to another, and thus *troubled with many Things*, like *Martha*, *Luke* x. 41, 42. with which *one Thing* if my Spirit were taken up, I might come to ſome Profit, and get it done; but, ſeeking to graſp too much, I let all go. When many crowd out or in at a Paſſage, they hinder one another; but the Rule is, *Whatever thou doſt, do it with all thy Might*, i. e. Let thy Heart be taken up wholly with that one Thing while thou art doing it, and with no other.

10. *Satan*'s transforming into an Angel of Light, by gilding Vices with Luſtre and Appearance of Virtue, and under ſpiritual and ſpecious Pretences: Hence have I been tempted to Lightneſs, Exceſs in Comforts, under Pretence of ſhunning Unthankfulneſs, and of not uſing Chriſtian Liberty, and of walking uncomfortably; and hence neglected to affect the Heart with the Evil of Sin, becauſe Repentance conſiſts more in turning from Sin than in Sorrow for it. Prayer under Indiſpoſition hath been ſhunned, leſt I ſhould render the eaſy Yoke of Chriſt a griveous Burden: Whereby Sin hath prevailed by theſe, when it hath been overcome when it appeared in its own Clothing; and *the Grace of God turned into Wantonneſs*, 2 Cor. xi. 14. Rom. vi. 1. Gal. v. 13. *called to Liberty*, yet *not* to *uſe it as an Occaſion to the Fleſh*.

11. In following the Diſpoſition of my Spirit as a Rule in reference to Duty, rather than the Call of providential Conveniency of doing it; whereby many Occaſions of doing Good, to o-*thers* eſpecially, have been loſt thro' Indiſpoſition

to theſe Duties, and ſome ſeeming Diſpoſitions to do other Duties: And this is ſo much the more dangerous, that it begins to be a debated Principle, Which of the Two, *viz.* the Diſpoſition of the Spirit, or providential Conveniency, is to be followed? ſeeing, if I follow not the Diſpoſition of my Spirit, then I ſhall do the other Duty but heartleſly, and omit a Duty to which my Spirit is diſpoſed; and beſides, *Jam.* v. 13. would ſeem to be for it. But I have moſt Peace and Succeſs when I follow the providential Conveniency, *Mark* xiv. 37, 38.

12. There is nothing does me more Ill than a legal Spirit or Spirit of Bondage, whereby *Satan* preſſes to Duties violently, *i. e.* repreſents God as a hard Maſter and an auſtere Judge, as One that commands and requires Duties, as tyrannical Rulers make Laws to entrap the Subjects, preſſing to hard Duties, and ſo putting new Wine into old Bottles, and that under the higheſt Pains; and to do it haſtily, not giving Time to breathe; and requiring ſuch Exactneſs, or elſe not at all to be accepted; and that without any Promiſe of Aſſiſtance: So that, finding the Lord's Yoke ſo hard, I have either caſten it off, or ſometimes heartleſly performed it; and nothing hath prejudiced me more than this. Talents have been ſlighted, becauſe God was apprehended as a hard Maſter; the Lord not ſerved, becauſe our Yoke not made light; Averſion and Want of Love to God, becauſe of Fear, 1 *John* iv. 18. But I have ſpoken of this in Sect. 10. 1*ſt Evil.* 'Tis no Wonder therefore if the Bondwoman ſhould be caſt out; of the Evil of which when I have been convinced, I have come to the other

other Extreme, in caſting out the Bond-woman altogether, and to indulge myſelf wholly, as I have ſaid in the 10*th Deceit*.

13. When I could not be driven from laying to Heart Matters of Salvation, yet hath *Satan* for the moſt Part of my Time buſied me with the leſſer Matters of Religion, and made me neglect the ſubſtantial and fundamental Points; ſo as nice Points have been ſtudied, and Death, Hell, Heaven, God's Attributes, Sin, Providence, the Reſurrection, Fall of Man, have been neglected, becauſe more common; whereas the greateſt Good is in theſe, *Mat.* xxiii. 23. *Ye tithe Anniſe and Cummin.*

14. *Satan* by making me pore exceſſively on Evidences of Grace, and by occupying me in laying continually the Foundation and trying it, as thinking it never ſure enough, hath thereby kept me from my Generation-work, and from Progreſs in Grace; in which Exerciſes if I had been as diligent as in Examination of myſelf, I might have been aſſured more quickly, 2 *Pet.* i. 10. 'Tis true, we ſhould examine our States, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. but 'tis wrong to be only and continually taken up with this; ſo that, when called to Patience, and Believing, and Honouring of God, *Satan* hath ſaid, Lay a Foundation ere ye build a Superſtructure: But 'tis dangerous to be trying our Armour when we are called to fight (as one ſaid) *Heb.* vi. 1. If ye have not full Aſſurance of your State, yet take your Hazard of the precious Foundation laid in Zion, and build on it: God lays this Foundation, and this Foundation ſtandeth ſure.

15. In making Faith or any Work in us the Founda-

Foundation of my Comfort, rather than the free, full and immutable Promiſe and Good-will of God in Chriſt; and in making the Foundation of Duty to be rather from our Covenant with God, or our Part of it, than from the Lord's Covenant with us, and his Part of it, which hath a long Time kept me unſettled and wavering, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 5. *Ezek.* xvi. 62. *Not by Vertue of thy Covenant.*

16. But *Satan* and mine own Heart hath kept me ſtrongly and long in this Snare of ſeeking to eſtabliſh my own Righteouſneſs: For when my Heart hath been in any good Frame, and under Senſe of Wants, and deſiring to be found in Duty, hath reſolved to go about ſuch and ſuch Means, for obtaining of ſuch Things; I ſay, I have found *Satan* deceiving me herein, making me love theſe Duties, Means and Graces, and the obtaining them at ſuch a Time, becauſe theſe Graces and Duties, Means and Time have been the Product of mine own Deſires and Reſolutions, and ſo have been mine own (as it were) and Choice: And therefore, when other Means were beſtowed no leſs ſuitable, yet have deſpiſed them, becauſe not mine own Choice and Purchaſe; and when the Love and Manifeſtation thereof have run through another Chanel than I have cut for it to run in, I have been grieved, and prized the Mercy leſs: And, when I have fallen in Sins reſolved againſt, I have grieved more upon the Account that my Reſolutions have been broken, and Will croſſed, becauſe I had *ſet my Heart as the Heart of God*, than either for the Wrong done to God, or mine own Hazard; and *ſo, like God, I have* loved no Thing but the Ob-

 ject

ject of my own Decree: Whereby God hath been provoked to break these Resolutions, by which the Tower that reached to Heaven was cast down, *Prov.* xix. 3. *Rom.* x. 3. *Mark* xiv. 37. *Isa.* x. 7. *Psal.* lviii. 3.

17. When beaten out of this by the Lord's Mercy, and made to *rejoice in Infirmities*, that God may be exalted, seeing the Wildness of Pride under the Pretence of quiet Submission and being led by the Will of God, I have been tempted to resolve nothing at all, and so turned careless, running from one Extreme to another, contrary to *Philip.* ii. 12, 13.

18. Thro' a Desire to allow to every Action a Time wherein I should be so and so exercised, it hath come to pass that I have secretly resisted the Spirit drawing me to other Duties and Exercises, because I would not alter my intended Method; and so lost the Assistance of God's Spirit, *Deut.* i. 41. *Numb.* xiv. 39.

19. I have many Times in Prayer asked Things not convenient to be then granted, and so have not been answered thro' asking amiss; as when I have sought as much Grace as would serve me all my Lifetime, *James* iv. 3. *John* iv. 15. *Give me that I thirst not again.* Sometimes I have been seeking the Removal of a Trouble ere I have been rightly exercised under it, 2 *Cor.* xii. 8. sought great Enlargements and Raptures and sensible Manifestations, sought Mercies without Pains; which the Lord not granting, because amiss, I have been discouraged from Prayer thro' Refusals.

20. When difficult Duties have been pressed, as Mourning, Fasting, Diligence, Prayer under

der

r Indiſpoſitions, bearing the Croſs, walking
the ſtrait Gate, I have been made to think that
e End of that Command was moſtly to croſs
yſelf, and therefore did the Duty ofttimes more
mine own Prejudice and Croſs, rather than as
ommanded by God, and the Mean to attain ſuch
a End (hence Heathens cut themſelves, and Pa-
iſts whip themſelves) for this did me Ill; it en-
ndered hard Thoughts of God, and made me
o Duties heartleſly, as likewiſe without Succeſs,
ecauſe I ſought no more than the croſſing of my-
lf.

21. In not prizing or eſteeming little Mercies ecauſe common, and fear to reſt in them; thus *eſpiſing the Day of ſmall Things.*

22. In not ſhunning little Evils, fearing to be hereby *tithing* the *Anniſe and Cummin.*

23. Thro' a ſtrong Perſwaſion of an abſolute Decree in God, which yet I judge Truth, and of God's Sovereignty, and that *it is not of him that willeth or runneth, but of God that ſheweth Mercy*; I have been thereby tempted to excuſe my Sins, to challenge God for Double-dealing, have not noticed his Invitations and Expoſtulations, *Rom.* ix. 19. *Who hath reſiſted his Will?* Not diſtinguiſh'd betwixt the Nature of God, and free abſolute Decree of God, and Operation of God; and that it is not the Damnation of the Wicked God ultimately and for itſelf intends, but the Manifeſtation of his Juſtice.

24. By *limiting of the holy One of Iſrael*; by putting out and preſcribing to God a Way of helping me; and when he hath not come in my Way, as he will not, nor no Reaſon he ſhould, I could not imagine his Coming a Mercy, 2 *Kings*

v. 11. in *Naaman*. Hence I have propoſed God's Way with other Chriſtians, and their Exerciſes, as the Way to the Spirit to deal with me; and, not finding this, I have been diſcouraged and diſquieted and unthankful, and *ſpent my* Labour and *Strength in vain*, in gazing after that, and labouring to walk in a Path the Lord was not willing to lead me. There is a Sovereignty in leading of Saints to Glory. I have limited the Lord in his Way, by pourtraying to myſelf, and conceiving ſuch a Grace, and under ſuch a Notion and Form; ſo that if I had not that very Form and Notion of it I conceived, tho' I had it really, yet did I not think I had it. Oh under what various Terms doth the Lord expreſs one Thing, that Folk might not reſtrict Grace to one Notion!

25. In ſtriving againſt the outward Acts of Sin, and not conſidering the inward Corruption of the Heart; in *making clean the Outſide of the Platter*, but neglecting to cleanſe it within; cutting the Branches, and ſparing the Root, *Matth.* xxiii. 26. whereby I have made no Profit in Holineſs, becauſe the Fountain hath not been cleanſed.

26. Under the Pretence of Diſcretion, Prudence and Patience, I have neglected the Life and Zeal of Actions. I have reproved but darkly, in reſpect of Prudence and Diſcretion; I have not ſtreſſed myſelf in private Means, under Pretence of Sobriety; have neglected to bring my Heart to any Senſe of Sin, under Pretence of Moderation. Oh what Ills ly diſguiſed under Moderation, Sobriety, Patience and Chriſtian Liberty! We have a ſinful Patience.

27. By going on in Duties in my own Strength, *without* looking for Divine Aſſiſtance, which hath

done me much Evil. When I have gone on in the Confidence of my own Strength, the Lord hath plagued me for my Preſumption, as in *Peter*: When Duties have been difficult, relying on and looking to mine own Strength, I have been diſcouraged.

28. I have neglected the outward Practice of Repentance, under Pretence that the Lord requires the Heart; but we ſhould ſerve the Lord both in Body and in Spirit. 'Tis true, we ſhould not reſt in the outward, or mainly look thereunto, but ſhould look to the Heart moſtly; yet ſhould not the outward Act be neglected.

29. By giving ear and credulouſly believing Suggeſtions of Senſe concerning myſelf and Intereſt, and concerning God, without Examination, Credulity, and Eaſineſs to believe every Thing ſuggeſted or ſpoken in Books, or written down there, hath prejudiced me much. Hanging my Faith on Mens Belts, and not examining Suggeſtions, Doctrines, Writings thro' the Line of Reaſon and thro' Scripture, hath made me wander long in Doubts and Fears unſettledly; but ſince I have tried all Things, and laid aſide all Books, and had Recourſe to the Fountain, I have been much better.

30. By judging by outward Appearances, and misbelieving of Succeſs (which hath come thro' not looking to God) hath much diſcouraged me from Duty.

CHAP. VIII.
Declaring Mercies.

SECT. I.
Containing general Mercies.

1. I Find Reaſon to bleſs the Lord for continued and perfect Health, ſo as I never remember that I lay (except when I had the ſmall Pox) two Days ſick, either thro' Pain or Heart-ſickneſs.

2. I have Reaſon to bleſs the Lord for the Mercy of good Education; ſo that, wherever he did caſt my Lot, I had Occaſions of Good given me. I ſaw not much wild Example; and theſe whom I was with, the Lord did put them out to take ſome Pains with me, which tho' it did not convert me, yet did prepare for it.

3. In beating me out of all my falſe Reſts, and Refuges of Lies; in which if I had continued, I had periſh'd for ever. O what a Mercy, that the Lord diſcovered to me my Condition, the Vanity of Duties, mine own Inability to ſave myſelf, the Diſtance and Enmity betwixt God and my Soul!

4. Sparing Mercies. O what hath the Lord born of me! ſurely more than of any other whatſoever. How often did I provoke him to ſend me to my Place! He ſpared me, notwithſtanding of my Blaſphemy, my Sabbath-breaking, my palpable breaking of Vows, ſinning againſt Light, *Back*ſliding, Curſing even in a Lie, Profanity, *mock*ing in Duties, Untractableneſs; yea, when *he* might have had great Glory by my Deſtruc-

ction. Who hath or could have born ſo much as the Lord? and ſhould I not therefore love? They *love much, becauſe much is forgiven.*

5. O the great Pains the Lord hath taken, and the Coſt he hath been at with me! What Pains in my firſt Education! What Pains in Converſion! What Pains after Converſion! What Pains in recovering out of Backſliding! What Pains by Afflictions, by Tentations, Convictions, Mercies of all Sorts, Waterings publick and private! What a conſtant Suiter hath he been for my Heart! What Day in which there hath not been ſome Meſſage or other! Surely he is in very good Earneſt with me, he hath conſtantly and uninterruptedly followed me.

6. In beſtowing ſaving Grace on my Soul; waſhing me from Nature, from Sin and *Satan* and Hell; by renewing his Image on my Soul; by enlightning mine Eyes, quickning my dead Soul, changing me quite, giving me Reſt; by admitting me to Fellowſhip with himſelf; by entring in a Covenant with me; by taking me from my ſinful Ways and Courſes, and conforming me to his Ways, in Heart, Speech and Practice; making an inward, bleſt, right and univerſal Change, differing from formal Hypocrites and Goſpel-profeſſors that are carnal.

7. In recovering me out of a backſlidden Eſtate, after Careleſneſs and Security, departing from God, until I had ruined myſelf again, and was as it were *twice dead*; and, when I was at the laſt Gaſp, he pitied me, recovered me, engaged me in his Service, kept me thro' his Power and Goodneſs (notwithſtanding of many Oppoſitions) at *this Diet, until I* at laſt recovered, and that he

he did ſet me on a *Rock higher than I.* O what Coſt and Expences was my Recovery to him! He would not let me die at a Diſtance with him, but by Afflictions and ſore Trials called me home.

8. Mercies in a Wilderneſs-Condition. When yet but weak, how did he condeſcend to my Weakneſs! Tho' he was *the high and lofty One,* how did he bear my Manners, my Murmurings, my Faintings, my Luſtings, my Impatience, my Dulneſs, my Deadneſs, my Unbelief! He never left me for all theſe Things, but was ever with me; he ſupplied all my Wants, and many a Time revived my fainting Soul, and did carry me as an Eagle doth her young Ones, and *no ſtrange god with him* at all; he never left me until he brought me to a large Land and fruitful. Oh the Care he had of me in the great Wilderneſs, preſerving me and carrying me through, was a wonderful Mercy.

9. I am obliged unto the Lord for Talents; that he created me not void of Underſtanding, but hath put me in ſome Capacity to be ſerviceable to him; he hath inſtructed me in the wonderful Things of his Law, made me know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God: And what ſhall I ſay? my natural Abilities were very much helped and improven by Grace; *Thro' thy Precepts I have* attained to *Underſtanding.*

10. I acknowledge with all Thankfulneſs the great Mercy of God in keeping me on his Side in this evil Day; that I have been preſerved in this general Apoſtaſy; that I have muſtered on his Side, and under his Standard, againſt the *Dragon* making War in Heaven againſt the Lamb. *How* many have Profanity, Error, Vanity, Formality,

mality, Sloth and Worldlineſs deſtroyed, or rendered uſeleſs? yea, even tall Cedars: Yet me hath he kept from the deſtroying Peſtilence, yea, kept in Life, and thro' Grace privileged to be a plain Witneſs for him againſt the Dragon and the Courſes of theſe Times; to do ſome little Thing, at leaſt to ſhew my Good-will.

11. By *upholding me with his Viſitations*, innumerable Times *reſtoring my Soul* to Life, preſerving *my Feet from falling, and mine Eyes from Tears*. Oh the many loving refreſhing Viſitations I had of him, under Deadneſs, Confuſions, Diſtractions, Sorrows, Weights! Hence hath he been as the clear ſhining Sun after the Rain. Theſe have been the Means by which I have been kept in Life; theſe are his Favours, in theſe Days of Famine feeding me and keeping me in Life.

12. In many Times delivering me out of Hell itſelf; when the Sorrows of Death compaſt me about, when overpowered with Deſpair, he brought me out of the great and terrible Pit; and when all other Means and Friends failed, and neither could nor would help, the Lord himſelf ſtept in, and calmed all theſe terrible Storms, when I could not bear any longer: Nor was I ever in any Extremity but he helped me, yea, out of great and ſore Troubles.

13. Mercies in Afflictions. Surely *in Faithfulneſs hath he afflicted me*. It is a Mercy to be taken in under his Diſcipline, a Covenant-mercy; but he hath ſupported me in all my Afflictions: And when a *Sign* and a *Wonder*, and a *Terror to* all *Friends and Acquaintances*, left of *Friends and Relations*, and ungratefully uſed by them

them, then did *the Lord take me up*, and gave me Shelter, *Meat* and Drink *that the World knew not of*; and what ſhall I ſay? *at laſt delivered me out of them all*, at leaſt out of the moſt preſſing, and that by his own Hand. He hath delivered me from all Dangers, Fears, Snares and Sorrows.

14. All theſe are heightned by theſe Circumſtances; 1*mo*, That the Lord hath viſited me with ſpecial Love, the Right-hand Bleſſings, Grace, Chriſt and Sanctification. 2*do*, That it is the Lord himſelf that is eminently ſeen in them; he lets none do me Good but himſelf, eſpecially great Deliverances; the Lord brings all about wonderfully. 3*tio*, I ſee them all ſtampt with free Grace, and their Motto, *Not for your Sakes, but for my Name's Sake, and becauſe of the Lord Jeſus.* I ſee them all proceeding from the free Grace and Love of Chriſt Jeſus. 4*to*, That he hath ſingled me out of all my Tribe and Kindred, and paſt by them all, and choſen me for himſelf. 5*to*, That the Lord is ſeen univerſally in all theſe Things: He doth all Things moſt excellently for me; not in one or two Particulars, but in every Thing I have ado. *Thou, Lord, wilt ordain Peace for us; for thou haſt wrought all our Works in us*, Iſa. xxvi. 12. 6*to*, The Lord is conſtant in his Kindneſs; 'tis not for a Fit or Start, but theſe whom he hath loved, he loveth to the End: His Love is a conſtant Love, he *never takes away his Loving-kindneſs*. 7*mo*, That the Lord by all Mercies ſanctifies me, and draws me nearer to himſelf: I am made to know more of God by theſe; my Heart is warmed in Love and Affection towards

him

him by the Remembrance of theſe; and thro' Experience of theſe I am made to come to him, and depend on him, and engaged to Thankfulneſs. 8*vo*, That they are to me, who am ſo wild, ſo miſerable, ſo ſinful, who have abuſed his Grace and Mercy, and daily grive him, and am leſs than the leaſt of all his Mercies; this heightens the Mercy. What am I, that the Lord ſhould viſiſt me? *Laſtly*, Conſidering this, that when Favours are ſo few; 'tis much in a Day of Indignation, much in a Day of Famine and Confuſion, when all are generally crying out, *My Leanneſs*.

SECT. II.

Of ſpecial Mercies, or little particular Favours from the Lord, as to my ſpiritual Condition and temporal.

AS for particular Mercies, they are innumerable and paſt Reckoning, and would take up much Time to tell them over, and much Pains to write them down; and becauſe I purpoſe to write them by themſelves at large, and in reſpect any who reads what I have written may there ſee many of them, I will forbear.

Thus have I run thro' the moſt remarkable Circumſtances of the Lord's Providence towards me in my Converſion, and what followed thereupon; and have been ſignally aſſiſted in calling to Mind and obſerving the Lord's Way and Mind in them. And what can I ſay or give to the Lord for all his Mercies and Pains! but, Bleſſed for ever be he, that ever looked upon me, that hath done ſo great Things for me, that hath born with me till now,

and

and hath given me Time and Strength to ſet down on Record his Kindneſs! O that I may walk worthy of his Pains! To him, thro' Chriſt Jeſus, be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

Glory to God in the Higheſt, and on Earth Peace, and Good-will towards Men.

What follows was not dedicated to Mr. *Thomas Roſs.*

CHAP. IX.
Of my Call to the Miniſtry.

SECT. I.
The Grounds upon which I judged myſelf called to the Miniſtry.

1ſt, I Was much concerned to know whether I was indeed called by the Lord to the Exerciſe of the Miniſtry, or whether any Inclination or Preſſure of Spirit I had thereto did proceed from my own Fancy; for I can never think that any will diſcharge this Office aright, who hath not a Senſe of his Divine Call upon his Spirit, or comfortably go about the ſame, neither can promiſe himſelf any Succeſs therein: For ſuch as the Lord hath not called, *nor ſtood in his Counſel,* 'tis threatned that they *ſhall not profit this People,* Jer. xxiii. 32. Therefore 'tis of much Concernment to us to be clear in this. Yet I acknowledge many are called of Chriſt to *preach,* who do not know it, but fear they are *not;* even as many are effectually called, who know

know not ſo much; and therefore it is that both the one and the other live leſs comfortably. And as many think they belong to, and have Intereſt in Chriſt, who really have none; ſo, many judge themſelves, and are judged by others, to be true Miniſters of Chriſt, who are not, but Idol-miniſters, never commiſſioned by Chriſt.

2*dly*, Therefore did I judge it my Duty to endeavour to have my Call cleared to me, and for this Cauſe have ſet apart ſome ſolemn Days, in which by Faſting and Prayer, both before I entred to the Miniſtry and after, I have earneſtly beſought the Lord for Light in this Matter, and to clear to me whether he called me or not; and have ſeriouſly ſearched and meditated, and ſadly thought on this Subject: And the Iſſue of all ſuch Deliberations was, that I was inclined to think, from what I could gather from God's Word or Work, that he did call me to *bear his Name*, to *deliver from the Power of* Satan *to God*, to *witneſs for God*, that the Works of the World were Evil.

3*dly*, The Grounds upon which I was convinced and did believe the Lord called me were, 1. That I was not now to expect audible Voices from Heaven in an extraordinary Manner, or within us, ſaying, *Ariſe preach the Goſpel*; for, however Apoſtles and extraordinary Prophets were ſo called immediately, yet that ſuch who now are called do receive it by Means of Men: Therefore, tho' I did not receive any extraordinary Voice within or without, there was no Reaſon upon that Account to doubt of my Call. 2. That much leſs was a Man's own Imagination or *groundleſs Fancy* to be counted a Call from God; for

for many (I ſay) think they are called of God; as *Jer.* xxiii. whom the Lord *hath not ſent.* 3. That any Act of Man doth not give a Call to a Miniſter; for Ordination by Miniſters, or Election by the People, which are the two Means by which it is pretended this Call is conveyed, is poſterious to this Call of God: And, beſides, Miniſters may ordain, and People may elect, ſuch as were never called of God; ſo, tho' never ſo regularly ordained and admitted, yet are they to be eſteemed no Miniſters of Chriſt.

4thly, As the Revelation of God's Word in all Ages hath been the Rule whereby to diſcern who have been called of God to be his Servants, and who not; and therefore, when God revealed himſelf immediately to his Prophets, this immediate Revelation publiſhed by the Prophets was the Ground of Faith and Rule of Practice: So now, the Revelation of God's Will being committed to Writ or Scripture, it hence follows that by the Scriptures only we can know who are his Miniſters called of him, and who are not; and this Knowledge is as certain as any Knowledge that could be had from the Prophets of Old, and as clear and evident, *Luke* xvi. *If they believe not* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they believe tho' one ariſe from the Dead.* The Scriptures then I muſt look into, and by them know whether the Lord hath called me or not. The General I find in ſeveral Places of Scripture: *Luke* xix. 13. *Occupy till I come.* 1 Pet. iv. 10. *As every one hath received the Gift, ſo let him miniſter unto another.* 1 Cor. xii. 7. *The Manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to profit withal.* By all theſe Scriptures I gather, that, what-

whatever Talents Men have received from Chriſt, they are not to ly idle, nor to be kept up in a Napkin, but that they are to be put in Uſe and exerciſed for God: And this Scripture, *Occupy till I come*, is the general Warrant that Miniſters and all other Perſons of different Occupations and Gifts have to diſcharge their Office. If any then enquire, What is my Call to preach? I anſwer, Our Lord's Command and Call, *Occupy till I come*. The Word was brought to my Remembrance, when I was exerciſed about this Matter; and, did not the Lord command us in his Word, no Man ſhould miſimprove any Talent he hath; Miniſters in preaching do not but occupy till Chriſt come. And here is my firſt Ground.

5thly, By this general Call none is particularly engaged to follow the Miniſtry but ſuch as are qualified: For he who is fitted for an Artificer, for a Scholar, for a Lawier, for a Phyſician; altho' he is bound by this General to employ his Talent for God, yet is not every one by this Scripture bound to diſcharge the Office of the Miniſtry, unleſs he be qualified thereto. It is therefore further requiſite to a Divine Call, that the Perſon be fitted more for this, than for any Thing elſe: He therefore who is not qualified for the Miniſtry, hath not Gifts, is not called; and he who is more fitted for this than for any Thing elſe, is called of God, becauſe he is called to miniſter as he hath received, 1 *Pet.* iv. 10. A Man's Talent is the Determiner of that General, *Occupy till I come*. Now I begin to ſee what is my Talent; and truly there was no other *Thing I was* more fitted for, or qualified, as

Preaching

Preaching and ſerving God in the Miniſtry: And tho' my Parts were but weak, and my Talent ſmall, eſpecially in the Beginning; yet did I ſee ſome Meaſure of Qualifying and Divine Preparation for this Work, and truly more than for any other Employment, and therefore did I judge I was bound to occupy for God in that Work. Some natural Endowments I had, by which I was ſufficiently capable of any Science, yea, of natural Theology: The Dealings of God with my Spirit in the Work of Converſion were very diſtinct; and tho' I could not ſee but confuſedly at firſt, yet afterwards I did ſee to perceive that Work very diſtinctly: And not only ſo; for I judge it very needful for a Miniſter to be converted ere he endeavour to convert others, *Luke* xxii. 32. *Pſal.* li. 12, 13. *Reſtore the Joy of thy Salvation; and then will I teach Tranſgreſſors thy Ways.* So, *Iſa.* vi. 7. the Prophet's Iniquity muſt be taken away ere he receive his Commiſſion, and that after deep Humbling in the Duſt. The Lord did not only, by Converſion begun and renewed, fit me for the Miniſtry; but did give me great Experience of the exceeding Evil of my Heart, of the Terrors of God, that ſo I might know to perſwade others, 2 *Cor.* v. 8. as likewiſe open'd my Eyes to ſee the glorious Myſteries of the Covenant of Grace, telling me ſomething every Day as it were: And truly I had not been many Days in Chriſt's School, judging the Covenant of Grace, when I thought I was come to a new World; my former Life ſeem'd a dark howling Wilderneſs, and the Life of Grace I look'd upon as the lightſom *Canaan*, the Harbour of Reſt after my Toſſings. Diverſe and various

rious Conflicts I had with Unbelief, and much exercised with the Law and the Bond-woman, seeking to get in my Conscience. I was much helped by *Luther* on the *Galatians*, and *Calvin*'s Institutions; something more by that Book called the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*; by some old Writers, as *Fox*, *Bradwardin*'s Letters, Mr. *Hamilton* and *Wisheart*; but especially by reading the Epistle to the *Romans*, by Prayer and Meditation, by which I came to receive very much Satisfaction in my Mind in the Gospel. I perceived that our Divinity was much altered from what it was in the primitive Reformers Time: When I read *Knox*, *Hamilton*, *Tindal*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Bradford*, &c. I thought I saw another Scheme of Divinity, much more agreeable to the Scriptures and to my Experience than the Modern. And tho' I plainly enough saw the Errors of the *Antinomians* (for their Errors lay very near Truth) yet I perceived a Gospel-spirit to be in very few, and that the most Part yea of Ministers did wofully confound the two Covenants, and were of an Old-testament Spirit; and little of the Glory of Christ, Grace and Gospel did shine in their Writings and Preaching. But I abhorred and was at Enmity with Mr. *Baxter*, as a stated Enemy to the Grace of God, under the Cover of opposing some *Antinomianism*: He boldly averred what others thought and materially believed, even whilst they did speak against him; by which he was hardned in his Way. Now I thought the great Pains the Lord did take in this with me, the Experience also I had of great Afflictions, and the Lord's Support under them, and delivering from them, and sanctifying of the same to me,

by inſtructing me in many chief Leſſons by the Rod; What ſhould all this mean, ſaid I, but that the Lord gives me Experience of theſe Things, to the End I ſhould *make* this his *Righteouſneſs known in the great Congregation?* If this be *ſpoken in* my *Ear*, ſhall I not divulge it *on the Houſe-tops?* Luke xii. And was not all this to qualify me, and make me a fit Miniſter of the New Teſtament? And this was a ſecond Conſideration to clear my Call to me.

6thly, The Lord did by his Spirit apply the general Call particularly to my Soul: He brought home that Word, *Occupy till I come*; and dealt with me, told me that the Lord called me to *ſerve him in the Goſpel of his Son*, and to employ what Talents I had that Way; was at much Pains with me till I ſhould yield: For Gifts and Abilities to preach and pray are not a ſufficient Call to a Man to be a Miniſter, tho' they be neceſſary to the Call. A Man's natural Gift and Ability for any Magiſtracy doth not preſently call him to that Office; and ſome have Gifts for divers Offices, that yet are called but to one. And hence it is, that a Man's Call to the Office of the Miniſtry is in ſome Things different from the Call of Believing: For that Call or Command of God to believe, reaching all within the viſible Church, doth oblige all thereunto, whether they do ſo or not, yea, whether the Spirit ſtrive with them or not, tho' without this they neither ſhall nor can believe; but this Call to the Miniſtry, tho' it be in God's Word, yet it doth not oblige any particularly to the Work of the Miniſtry without the working of the Spirit: And therefore is the Application of the Spirit, in the Matter of the

the Call to the Miniſtry, a very neceſſary Part, and conſtituent of the Call, and requiſite not only to enable us to the Thing as it is in the Caſe of Believing, but likewiſe to warrant that particular Thing. For, however the general Call, *Occupy till I come*, do warrant ſuch as have Parts and Talents to employ them for God; yet doth it not warrant a godly able Man to exerciſe his Talents in a publick miniſterial Way more than any others, until the Spirit determine his Spirit: And this I found the Spirit did likewiſe to me, (1.) In repreſenting to my Soul the Beauty and Glory of the Office of the Miniſtry. O to ſerve the Lord in this! ſaid I; nothing is like it! To *teſtify* for God, to hold forth *the Riches of Chriſt*, to bear his Name; What more honourable Employment! And like as the Merchant muſt ſee the Pearl ere he buy it, *Mat.* xiii. 45. and we muſt *ſee the Son* ere we *believe in him*, ſo that Beauty and Glory of the Work of the Miniſtry muſt be ſeen ere we take with it. (2.) The Lord by his Spirit did draw out and incline my Heart to this Work; and ſo many Times I was taken off from other Studies and Exerciſes, and was ſet on this, and many Times did I ardently deſire it; yea, I had marvellous Delight in the Exerciſe of any Work belonging to the Miniſtry, whether it was reading of Theology either practical or polemick, meditating upon or writing my Thoughts, ſtudying or preaching of Sermons: And truly Parents ſend their Children to theſe Trades that they obſerve them to be moſt of themſelves inclined to; *Send me*, ſaid *Iſa.* vi. 6. (3.) By fitting, preparing and qualifying me for that Employment; by renewing a diſtinct Work of Con-

verſion in my Soul; by exerciſing me with various and great outward Afflictions; by diſcovering unto me ſomething of the Myſtery of Grace and of the Goſpel: And the more fitted I was, the more inclined to the Work; and tho' I ſtudied but little, yet the Lord bleſſed it marvellouſly. (4.) By doing my Soul good, in being exerciſed in preparing for the Miniſtry: For it was by ſtudying to preach, and Meditation on ſeveral Subjects, that my Soul recovered out of my ſad Backſliding; and, by meditating upon Subjects and preaching of them, I daily grew in Grace and Knowledge of Chriſt.

7*thly*, The Lord not only by his Spirit working inwardly upon me, but likewiſe by his Work, did clear that he called me: For my Heart was utterly averſe to any other Study or Employment; all Attempts, Deſigns and Endeavours to ſettle in any other Station were cruſh'd and broken, and Matters in the World went ſtill worſe and worſe, until I reſolved and engaged with the Work of the Miniſtry; and from that Time I obſerved the Weather turned, and my Captivity was turned back. What Judgment can I make of the Lord's barring all other Doors, and his opening of this, but that I ſhould go in here, and look to no other Thing?

8*thly*, I'm much confirmed in my Call to the Miniſtry by that Providence of the Vows I made to this Purpoſe, that I ſhould be drawn out to make ſuch a Vow; that the Lord ſhould ſo ſoon teſtify his Approbation thereof, and anſwer me ſo ſuddenly, ſo clearly, ſo fully, and ſo particularly and ſuitably to my Vow in all Things: For my Want of Aſſurance was my great Doubt, and

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hat which made me afraid to engage with the Miniſtry; whereupon I vowed ſolemnly, that if he Lord ſhould clear up my Intereſt to me, and eveal the Myſtery of the Goſpel, Covenant of race, and Faith to me, I ſhould then apply myſelf to the Miniſtry, provided the Lord did anwer this in five Years. But the Lord in leſs than x Weeks anſwered it; for in a Month, or thereout, did the Lord convince me of Faith, called me to believe, opened his Covenant to me, ever left me till I believed it, and thereafter ealed it with the Spirit of Aſſurance: And in my Vow I ſaid, that, if the Lord would hearken o me, in clearing of theſe Things, I would look on it as an evident Token he called me to ſerve him in the Goſpel.

9thly, About the latter End of the Year *1665*, I remember the Lord put this Call cloſs to my Door, told me I was to be his Witneſs, to teſtify for him againſt the World, to do all the Good I could to Mankind wherever I was called; and that I ſhould make this my only Work, and be faithful, free and full in it; that many Things needed Reformation, and that the Lord would employ me in it. This was preſſed much on me; and becauſe I refuſed, and, like *Jonah*, fled from the Lord, he ſent a Storm of Terrors after me, and I was caſten into a Sea and Depth of Hell many Weeks: The Work I was called to was ſo hard, that I durſt not undertake it, but delayed it.

10thly, Another Conſideration, that cleared my Call to me, was, That the Miniſters and faithful Servants of Jeſus Chriſt did ſolemnly examine my Call, and after Trial of my Gifts and

Converſation by ſeveral Exerciſes and Pieces of Trial recommended me, being intimately and of a long Time acquainted with me, having preached frequently in their hearing, and having given Proof of my Gifts, were ſo far ſatisfied with me, that unanimouſly, without the leaſt Cenſure, they agreed to truſt me in the Name of Chriſt with the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel; and this was in the Year 1672. They were better Judges than myſelf, and they found the Lord had called me, and therefore did in the Name of Chriſt declaratively impower me to exerciſe the Office of the Miniſtry.

Laſtly, When I conſider the Effects which followed on my Admiſſion to the Miniſtry, I am much confirmed in my Call; for by Preaching, and diſcharging my Duty otherwiſe, I myſelf was watered, my Gifts increaſed, more of the Lord's Will was manifeſted and made known to me, and my Labours were bleſſed to many, to whoſe Heart and Caſe the Lord made me many Times to ſpeak: And tho', while I was in *Scotland*, I never received nor would take a Sixpence for Preaching, but lived upon what was my own; yet I proſpered much in my outward Eſtate in the World, I cleared my Debts, I reſerved ſome Part of my Eſtate to my Debts, and maintained myſelf; I married all my Siſters, inſomuch that in fourteen Years I was better by eight or nine hundred Pounds *Sterling* than when I began, altho' there was never a Week but I preached twice, and ſometimes oftner. And this I looked upon as a Token of the Lord's Acceptance of my Labours.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Of a Miniſter's Work and Qualification.

1ſt, IT was not merely to ſhew or diſcover my Gifts, by letting People know what I could ſay from a Text of Scripture, that I was called; I had great Inclinations of myſelf to preach and ſpeak from Scripture: Nor was it to baptiſe or miniſter Sacraments, nor was it the Name or Title of a Miniſter that I was to take on, or which I did affect moſt; God did not ſend me to baptiſe, but to preach. But that which I was called to was, to teſtify for God, to hold forth his Name and Ways to the dark World, and to deliver poor Captives of *Satan*, and bring them to the *glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*: This was I to make my only Employment, to give myſelf to, and therein to be diligent, taking all Occaſions; and to be plain, full and free in this Charge. I was called to enter in hot War with the World and Sinners, to fight by my Teſtimony againſt them for God: This was it I was called unto, and unto a Converſation ſuitable thereunto, and to *take up the Croſs daily and follow Chriſt*. I was called to be a Watchman, and to take the Charge of the Care of all my Relations and Acquaintances; to be a Watchman over and Keeper of them, and to be free and faithful in this with every one, and my own Soul to ly at the Stake to be forfeit if I failed; and this Commiſſion might have been diſcharged, tho' I had never taken a Text or preached formally, *Acts* ix. 15. *Rev.* x. *John* vii. 7. *Acts* xx. 18. *Luke* v. 10. & 2 *Tim.* ii. 19.

2*dly*, This being the Miniſter's Work and Imployment, the Means and Ways by which he is to diſcharge this Commiſſion, and execute the End of his Calling, are, 1. By publick Preaching, holding forth their Sin and Miſery to Men, and the Remedy Chriſt Jeſus, and perſwading to be reconciled, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *Mat* xx. *Go*, Diſciples, *to all Nations, preaching to them; preach the Goſpel to every Creature under Heaven.* By this Means they publiſh their Commiſſion, and ſeek *Obedience to the Faith* in all the World, *Rom.* i. 5. And this they ſhould do *in Seaſon and out of Seaſon*, and, in Dependence on God both for what to ſay and a Bleſſing, ſhould ſay nothing but what they *have received from the Lord Jeſus*, and of which Chriſt ſhould be the *Alpha* and *Omega*. 2. He is to diſcharge his Office by praying for ſuch as are committed to his Charge, and that both publickly and privately, affectionately and fervently. You ſee, *Paul* doth not ceaſe to make mention of Churches in his Prayers: They are Prieſts to God, who not only make Supplication for themſelves, but for others. 'Tis true, every Chriſtian is bound to pray for the whole Church of Chriſt, and for the Members eſpecially to which himſelf is related; but a Miniſter is in a ſpecial Manner bound: He who doth not water his Labours with affectionate Prayers and Tears, I doubt that he ſhall labour ſucceſsfully. 3. He is to execute his Commiſſion by Exhortation, private and occaſional Inſtruction, whether for Reproof, Comfort, or Information and Direction. And this is it which I ſuppoſe I was moſt called unto, *viz.* to take all Occaſions with all Perſons in private Diſcourſe,

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to make the Name of Chriſt known, and to do them Good, and to do this as my only Work; and to do it boldly, and faithfully and fully: And this to do is very hard in a right and effectual Manner; to do this is harder than to preach publickly; and to be ſtrengthned, directed and encouraged in this, is that for which I ought to live near in a Dependence on Chriſt, *without* whom we *can do nothing*, and of whom is all our Sufficiency. In preaching there are a great many whom we cannot reach, and there are many to whom we have no Occaſion to preach publickly; we may thus preach always, and ſpeak more ſuccesfully than in Publick, where the greateſt Part of Hearers do not underſtand the Miniſter tho' he ſpeak never ſo plainly. This likewiſe we are called unto this Day, ſeeing we are by Force incapacitate; but oh how is this neglected! Were Miniſters faithful in this, we ſhould quickly ſee a Change in Affairs; but, alas, with Grief of Heart I ſpeak it, 'tis in this Thing that I challenge myſelf moſt of any, 'tis in this that I have moſt come ſhort, and I ſuppoſe it may be ſo with others too. The Apoſtles went from Houſe to Houſe.

4. The fourth Mean by which we are called to diſcharge the Office of the Miniſtry is by a godly Converſation; hereby we glorify God, and preach moſt effectually to others. Example is very powerful; and, where this is not, Preaching and other Labours are in vain; for, without this, the moſt ſeriouſly delivered Sermons are nothing in Effect but a well-acted Stage-play, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 10. This was it that made the Apoſtles Preaching ſo efficacious to the *Theſſalonians*, that they *perceived them* to be of very holy Converſation.

ſation. *Ye know what Manner of Men we were for your Sakes.* They illuſtrated by their Practice, as by Example, what they preached. All are bound to be holy, but Miniſters much more; and their godly Converſation is one of the Ways they preach, and which many Times doth convert. 1 *Pet.* iii. 2. ſome, not gained by the Word, are gained by the Converſation of their Wives, or their believing Relations. 5. They may diſcharge their Commiſſion by writing of Epiſtles or Treatiſes as the Lord ſhall call or enable them, and eſpecially when there is no Acceſs to other Means. Thus the Apoſtle *Paul* did write, when in Priſon, or when he could not get to them. Many Breathings are loſt for Neglect of this, ſaith Mr. *Shepherd.* To all theſe five Things I found myſelf called.

3*dly*, As to the Nature of my particular Call to preach the Goſpel; By ought I can diſcern thro' the Moving of God's Spirit, or the Encouragement I had thereto, it was not to preach to any particular Flock, gathered or ungathered; but it was to preach to the whole World, eſpecially my Relations and Acquaintances: My Commiſſion was much of the Nature of that Man's, *Mark* iv. *Go and ſhew thy Friends what God hath done for thee.* The Lord then had ſcattered both Shepherds and Flocks; we were then to preach wherever we could find People: Yea, tho' I had three Calls from three different Societies of Chriſtians, yet did I not incline to fix with any, *Mark* xvi. My Commiſſion, I thought, was rather indefinite than definite; *Preach the Goſpel to every Creature under Heaven.* (2.) And hence I was called to preach in a vagrant Manner,

ner, ſometimes to one Place, ſometimes to another, here and there, up and down the Country, as I was called by the People, not ſtaying above a Week in one Place: So at *Edinburgh*, where my Family was, where once every Week-day, if at home, I preached a Sermon, and on the Lord's Day. I loved not fix'd Stipends and Pulpits, while the Lord Jeſus himſelf was unfix'd; but thought it moſt kindly to follow the wandring Ark and Tabernacle. (3.) The chief Things I was called to preach and declare were, Man's Miſery by Nature, the Nature of Regeneration and Salvation by Chriſt, *Ezek.* xx. 4. *Micah* iii. 8. and my Spirit did more freely go out in a Goſpel-ſtrain than in a legal. I never in my Sermons reflected upon the Perſons of Rulers, or Council's; neither laboured to ſtir up the People, nor did I inſiſt ordinarily upon publick Differences: But tho' I did ſometimes (the Lord putting it in my Mind and Mouth) preach againſt the ungodly Miniſters the Curates, the particular Duties of the Times; yet were the ſubſtantial Truths of Religion the more ordinary Subject of my Diſcourſes, and it was *Chriſt and him crucified* that I was moſtly called to preach. (4.) I was called (I ſay) more to preach by private Exhortation, than by publick formal Preaching; and to endeavour the Converſion of ſome, and Edification of others, by tranſient occaſional Diſcourſes: And in the Diſcharge of this I found more Peace of Conſcience, greater Sweetneſs and Profit, than by preaching of many Sermons; yet in this I was moſt defective, and to it had leaſt Inclination. I found a private Exhortation and *Inſtruction, tranſiently* and occaſionally given, do

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more Good than many Sermons: And private Exhortation is Preaching, and hath the Advantage of publick Preaching, eſpecially at this Time, in this Regard, that there is more Self-denial, leſs carnal vain Ends in it, than in publick Preaching; In this occaſional Preaching, by way of tranſient Diſcourſe, we have Occaſion given us to make what we ſay plain, and beat it upon them, and hear what they ſay. *Laſtly*, We can do this without Breach of Law: We cannot do the other without undergoing great Suffering, and in Hazard to be fruſtrated; and the Lord, by the Prevalency of the Laws againſt theſe more formal Preachings, ſeems to call us to ſee what private Diſcourſes may do. (5.) I was called to preach plainly, particularly, and authoritatively as the Meſſenger of Jeſus Chriſt, with all ſorts of Perſons; yet courteouſly, wiſely, meekly, and gently: Not to ſpeak in a Cloud of general Words, but, *Thou art the Man*, to reach home; nor yet to ſpeak lightly or ſlightly, but ſeriouſly and gravely, that it may be reverenced and regarded by theſe to whom it is directed: For both we ſhould ſpeak what we ſay, and they hear, as the Word of God; yet withal wiſely and meekly, ſhunning to give Irritation. (6.) I was called to *ſerve God in the Goſpel of his Son* as my only and great Work, to make this my Trade and Calling, in which only, diligently, *in Seaſon and out of Seaſon*, to be employed; and to take no other Thing in Hand, but wholly to be given to this: *Give thyſelf wholly to theſe Things*, ſaith the Apoſtle to *Timothy*. Acts vi. 16. *We will give ourſelves to*

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the Word and Prayer. They would not ſo much as look to the Diſtribution of Supply to the Poor, leſt it ſhould divert them from their Function in the Word. (7.) And that I might the better diſcharge my Office, and confute Adverſaries, I was called to read ſome, and meditate on what I read. (8.) To diſcharge the Work of my Calling in a ſpecial Dependence on God, for Light, Life, Aſſiſtance, Wiſdom, and a Bleſſing. No Calling, no Work under Heaven, wherein there is more Need of Dependence on God, as the Work of the Miniſtry: Alas! we know neither what to ſay, nor how to ſay; *We are not ſufficient for theſe Things, but our Sufficiency is of God.* Nor ought we to ſpeak any Thing but as the Lord giveth Utterance. By this I perceive it is not every Perſon, yea, every Chriſtian or Saint, that is a fit and qualified Perſon for the Miniſtry; they muſt be *poliſh'd Shafts.* Right *Interpreters* are rare Perſons, *One of a Thouſand,* Job xxxiii. 23. Nay, very few of thoſe who are called of Men, are called of God to the Miniſtry: For, 1. Miniſters muſt be Perſons of good Parts and Endowments, able to convince and put to Silence Adverſaries; they muſt have Knowledge and Learning more than others. 2. They muſt be Saints and Chriſtians ere they be Miniſters; for *how ſhall* Satan *caſt out* Satan? What do all Gifts profit, if a Man want Grace or Charity? Is he not as a *tinkling Symbal?* How ſhall ſuch *perſwade* others, who themſelves never *knew the Terrors of the Lord?* Shall they tell others the Way to Heaven, that never themſelves travelled that Way? Is not this for *the Blind* to *lead* the Blind? *Can a Bleſſing be* expected on the Labours of ſuch?

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I do not ſay that Grace is eſſential to the Miniſtry, but Appearance of Grace and ſerious Profeſſion is needful; and it is neceſſary to the *bene eſſe* of a Miniſter. 3. He muſt have a more than ordinary Stock and Meaſure of Grace, of Knowledge, Patience, Zeal, Experience, Sobriety, Watchfulneſs, Faith; they cannot without this be *One of a Thouſand*: He muſt be one acquainted in ſome Meaſure with *Satan's* Devices, and with the Corners of the little World, the *Heart*. 4. A godly, heavenly, pure and ſpiritual Converſation and Behaviour, to illuſtrate what he delivers in Preaching, to exemplify a godly Life, is a clear Confirmation of a Miniſter's Doctrine; and if it do not convert them, yet ſtill it will convince them: And when the Converſation is contrary, or ſhort of the Doctrine preached, that Man *deſtroyeth what he buildeth*, he unpreacheth and confutes what he preaches, and gives Occaſion to People to think Religion a Stage-play. 5. The Miniſter muſt have the Senſe of his Charge, the Danger of immortal Souls deeply imprinted on his Heart; it muſt be clear to him, that the Lord hath called him, and to what he is called, and the Weight and Import of his Charge: 'Tis a Matter of Life and Death; hence the Charge of Propheſying, committed to the Prophets, is called a *Burden*. He that hath but ſlight Impreſſions of his Charge, will never faithfully diſcharge it. 6. He muſt love and take Pleaſure in his Work, be reconciled thereto: He muſt not only be convinced that ſuch a Work is incumbent upon him, and be ſome way ſufficient for the Diſcharge of it; but his Heart muſt ly to it, he muſt have a Will to it, elſe his Work is not accepted:

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With Good-will doing the Work of the Lord; God *meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh Righteouſneſs*. He that doth not ſo, will not continue long in it; hence there muſt be a Deſire of the Office of a Biſhop. *Paul* was affectionately deſirous of the *Theſſalonians*, and was *ſtraitned in Spirit* till he had diſcharged his Commiſſion; *Gladly willing to ſpend and be ſpent for you.* 7. He muſt be a prudent Man; *Be ye wiſe as Serpents*, Matth. x. *Being cunning, I caught you with Guile*; *He that winneth Souls is wiſe.* There is a Divine Wiſdom and Prudence in *Fiſhing of Men* for Chriſt. 8. He muſt be a tender-hearted Man, ready to ſympathize with all that are in Affliction either inward or outward, 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 7. be as a Nurſe to them. Compaſſion puts Miniſters to do much for the Souls of People; and, when People ſee the Compaſſion of Miniſters, it takes much with them. 9. They muſt always live near God, and depend on him for Wiſdom, Courage and Succeſs; they muſt be, with *Moſes*, much in the Mount. 10. They muſt be bold couragious Men, Men of great Zeal for God, *not afraid of the Faces of Men*, but *ſet their Face as a Flint*. 11. Humble Perſons, *bearing with much Meekneſs and Long-ſuffering thoſe that are out of the Way*, 2 Tim. ii. 25. Of all theſe Qualifications I had ſome ſmall Meaſure, of ſome more, of ſome leſs, but of none what I ought to have.

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SECT. III.

Obſervations and Inſtructions from the aforeſaid Narration.

THE Office of the Miniſtry is an honourable Employment. What a Truſt and an Honour hath the Lord been pleaſed to confer on me, that he hath intruſted me with the Charge of Souls, and to be his *Ambaſſador*, and *Witneſs*, and *Apoſtle* or *Meſſenger for Obedience to the Faith among all Nations? Unto me is this Grace given, that I ſhould preach the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt.* 2. I perceive that I am bound to another Kind of Life than the reſt of the World, to be holy in another Manner than they; that, as the Lord hath ſet me in a more eminent Place, ſo I ſhould be more eminent in Holineſs, adorning the Goſpel: They that *bear the Veſſels of the Lord*'s Houſe ought themſelves to be *holy* in a ſpecial Manner 3. A Miniſter's Work and Charge is very weighty; they're placed in the very Front of the Battle againſt the Devil and the World, to *declare the whole Counſel of God* to them; and they ſtake their Souls for Security of their faithful Diſcharge of their Duty. 4. Of all Sorts of Perſons in the World, they have geateſt Need of Dependence upon Chriſt for Light and Strength; for their Work is far above their Abilities, and therefore are they conſtantly to have their Eyes to the Lord for daily Supplies according to their Need. 5. I find I have great Reaſon to be humbled for my Shortcomings in ſeveral Things; as, 1ſt, That I have never been ſo ſenſibly affected with the great

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Charge the Lord hath put (and I have condeſcended to take) upon me. 2*dly*, In that I have not applied myſelf wholly to theſe Things, nor given myſelf to Word and Prayer as my only Work. How much of my Time hath been ſpent in not diſcharging any Part of my Duty? 3*dly*, I have been ſadly intangled with the Affairs of this Life, and my Heart is ſo taken up with them, that I had but little Heart to my Charge; at leaſt I could not wholly look to theſe Things. 4*thly*, I have not had that Tenderneſs towards periſhing Souls, nor ſuch Senſe of God's Preſence and Matters I have been ſpeaking of. 5*thly*, I have not ſo depended for Counſel, Direction, Strength and a Bleſſing from God: I have ſpoken in my own Wiſdom too much, and have not had Things ſo purely from God. 6*thly*, The Duty of particular Exhortation much ſlighted; many Means, as private Conference, writing of Letters towards ſaving and edifying of Souls, have been neglected. 7*thly*, My Converſation hath not been ſo ſhining and convincing as became a Miniſter. 8*thly*, I was many Times timerous and baſhful, when I ſhould boldly have appeared againſt Sin and for God. For theſe, with many ſinful Defects, I deſire to mourn and be humbled before the Lord, and to ſeek Mercy thro' the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

But, however I have great Cauſe to be humbled for many ſinful Defects I have been ſenſibly convinced of, and to flee to the Lord Jeſus his Blood ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins for pardoning Grace; yet I have the Lord to bleſs, and have great Peace and Comfort, for not a few Things that thro' his Grace I have attained: 1. That the

Lord hath ſo far honoured me, as to call me to ſerve him in the Goſpel of his Son, who was educated and placed in another Station in the World, and deſigned by my Parents and Friends for another Buſineſs. 2. That the Lord was at ſuch Pains, by converting me once and again, by ſore ſpiritual Conflicts and Exercifes, Defertions, lifting up and caſting down, Afflictions, Perſecutions, Death of Relations, Temptations and Trials, to qualify me in ſome Meaſure for the Miniſtry, and that for ſeveral Years before I entred thereunto. 3. That the Lord did ſo wonderfully bleſs the little Endeavours I uſed, and Pains I took, for increaſing my Knowledge, improving my Parts and Gifts. 4. That I am in ſome Meaſure not only called, but convinced of my Call, to the Miniſtry. 5. That I durſt never preach any Thing to others, but what I had ſome Experience of in my own Spirit: That I had myſelf walked in that Way that I directed others to walk in: That I never gave a Mark or Sign of Grace, but what I could ſay I found in myſelf: That I never ſtarted Doubts, or endeavoured to looſe them, but by theſe Means and Medicines the Lord's Spirit had formerly propoſed and looſed them to myſelf; I only delivered what I received from the Lord Jeſus. 6. That the Lord not only commiſſionated me to preach and *cry*, but directed me always *what* to cry ere I preached: Every Sermon I preached, I had it with ſome Warmneſs and Life from the Lord upon my own Spirit; and I durſt never preach that Sermon that I was not in ſome Meaſure affected with in ſtudying before I preached it. 7. That I never undertook the Office of the Miniſtry for filthy

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Lucre's Sake in the leaſt, refuſing Money for the Space of twelve Years, ſo that I had not a Farthing from any upon that or any other Account during all that Time, but wholly maintained myſelf with my own Eſtate; nor yet meerly or altogether from Pride or Vain-glory, but was deſirous of the Office to honour and ſerve Chriſt therein, and likewiſe to do all the Good I could to poor Sinners. 8. That my *Labours* were *not* altogether *in vain*, but much accepted with gracious Perſons and others, and efficacious to not a few; and my Repute was amongſt the beſt, and honoured more both at home and abroad than I deſired or deſerved. Common People did reputte me and love me, becauſe I ſpoke to their Capacities, and uſed Similitudes; theſe that were more knowing had me in Eſteem, becauſe I was full Maſter of whatſoever I ſpoke; and many liked me, becauſe I ſpoke of Things that were little touched by others, *viz.* the Difference betwixt Law and Goſpel, Freedom and Abſoluteneſs of the Covenant, and ſome peculiar Notions I had, which the moſt Part did reliſh, but ſome again did ſo far miſtake as to think I was a Setter-forth of new Opinions. 9. That I was in ſome Meaſure endowed with all the Qualifications needful to a Miniſter, tho' I had but a ſmall Degree of ſome of them. 10. That my Gifts, Parts and Graces ſenſibly increaſed, yea, and outward Eſtate in the World, ſince I entred upon the Work of the Miniſtry. 11. That as I ſenſibly found my own Weakneſs and Inſufficiency to do ought for the Lord, ſo I have as ſenſibly found the immediate Supply of the Spirit of Grace *enabling to diſcharge* the Duty of my Calling in a gra-

a gracious and comfortable Manner. 12. I bleſs the Lord, whatever were my Shortcomings and Failings, I never diſhonoured my Calling by any ſcandalous Sin; my Converſation was truly, in ſome Meaſure at leaſt, ſuitable to my Office. 13. That I was always on the Lord Jeſus his Side, and oppoſite to the Dragon and his Party. 14. That He gave me to ſuffer for his Truth, as well as to preach his Truth; and that all the Malice of Adverſaries did never make me change in Principle, or comply in the leaſt with them.

A Miniſterial Call is God's Command in his Word to ſuch as he hath gifted for that Employment to ſerve him in the Goſpel, applied by the Spirit to the Heart inwardly, and found and declared to be ſuch by ſuch as he hath appointed for that Purpoſe, and received for that Effect by his Church. 2. The Subject of this Power is the Lord Jeſus, from whom he receives it: But the Church, conſiſting of ſpiritual Officers and profeſſed Believers, are the Inſtruments of Application; the one by Election, by which he is made Miniſter of ſuch a People; and the other by Appointment or Ordination. It is from Chriſt that all true Miniſters have their Commiſſion: But the Lord Jeſus, the only chief Biſhop, appoints Servants to ſee his Commiſſion; and, in caſe they diſcern it to be from Chriſt, are to publiſh the ſame. 3. It would ſeem that Miniſters ordaining and ſolemnly appointing a Perſon to the Work of the Miniſtry, is much declarative of what Chriſt doth principally; as it is with an Ambaſſador or Herald who denounces War, it is his Maſter who doth it, he but miniſterially *publiſhes* and declares it, and at moſt he doth

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but inſtrumentally and miniſterially denounce War. 4. Yet are not miniſterial Acts of Preaching, Ordaining, Excommunicating, mere idle Declarations, but have an inſtrumental Cauſality, and are efficacious, producing Effects; and hence we hear tell of *hewing by the Prophets*, and of *the Sword of* Eliſha, *which ſhould ſlay*; *Jeremiah* is *as Fire*, and the People *as Wood to be conſumed*. 5. Yet it is not this by vertue of any natural, innate Cauſality in the Word preached, or other Ordinance diſpenſed; but the Lord doth make Uſe of the Miniſter's Declaration (for in itſelf it is no more) as a paſſive Mean to do his Will by; as a Chanel is ſaid to convey the Water into the Sea, tho' it cannot put forth any active Efficacy thereunto. 6. In ſome Caſes Miniſters have Authority to preach, either by Election or Ordination: The Want of any of theſe doth not annul a Miniſter's Office, the Lord conferring the Power ſometimes by Ordination as the Chanel, and ſometimes by Election. Ordination, I think, makes a Miniſter; or the Lord, by laying on the Hands of the Presbytery, doth confer a Right to preach, and make a Miniſter: And the Election of a People doth make a Man their Miniſter. 7. As every Chriſtian who is baptiſed in any particular Church, is baptiſed in the univerſal Catholick Church, and therefore hath Right to a viſible Fellowſhip with it in all Privileges; ſo he who is ordained a Miniſter, is a Miniſter of the univerſal Catholick Church, and may exerciſe miniſterial Acts in any Place of the World, may preach and adminiſter the Sacraments, and the like. 8. I ſuppoſe therefore, the Practice of indefinite Ordination is very warrantable, that is,

of ordaining a Miniſter tho' not to any particular Charge, eſpecially *in eccleſia conſtituenda* or *turbata*, where Miniſters cannot ſtay in one Place, and where the univerſal Confuſion of the Church doth call for Help. In a conſtitute ſettled Church, Elders indeed are appointed in every City; for ſo the firſt Miniſters, Apoſtles, ſeventy Diſciples, Evangeliſts, were ordained; ſo Mr. *Wiſheart*, *Tindal*, *Bradford*, Mr. *Patrick Hamilton*, and moſt of our extraordinary firſt Reformers. 9. No unqualified Perſon, that is, no ſcandalous Perſon, no ignorant or profane Man, who is not able in ſome Meaſure to convince the Adverſary, can be counted a Miniſter in the Court of Heaven or of Men: For God never calls ſuch in his Word to preach, whom he hath not ſomeway fitted for the Work; nor doth the Spirit of Chriſt apply this Call to any but to ſuch as are qualified: And if Men call any who viſibly appear not to be ſo qualified, as they may, and alſo too frequently do, it is *clave errante*; this Unqualified, ſo ordained is no Miniſter, more than a Woman ordained is to be eſteemed a Miniſter of Chriſt: For the ſame Law, that diſcharges and interdicts the one, interdicts the other. 10. The Office and Acts of ſuch, as Ordination and Baptiſm, tho' in themſelves null, yet they are effectual to godly Perſons, to whom their *Uncircumciſion becomes Circumciſion*; and therefore are not neceſſary to be retracted. The ſame I ſay of Popiſh Prieſts, who are not Miniſters of Chriſt; the Ordinances diſpenſed by them are all in themſelves null, yet, to ſuch as obſerve the Law of Circumciſion, their *Uncircumciſion becomes Circumciſion*: And conſequently, a Popiſh Prieſt turning orthodox, and

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renouncing the great Whore, and all Antichriſtian Authority, there is no need he be re-ordained. 11. As there is no Neceſſity of the Re-ordination of ſuch, nor of the Re-baptiſing of ſuch as Popiſh Prieſts or wicked ſcandalous Miniſters do baptiſe; ſo, I think, the one may be re-ordained, and the other in caſe of Scruple may be re-baptiſed. 12. There is no true Miniſtry nor true Ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt in the Popiſh Church, nor Salvation in it as ſuch. That Work and Employment, which the Lord doth call us to, is ordinarily that which we find our corrupt Natures have moſt Averſion to, and therefore moſt difficult; for *Satan* will ſtir up the greateſt Oppoſition thereunto, as we ſee in *Moſes* and *Jeremiah*: Therefore that Part of the Miniſtry your Hearts have greateſt Averſion to, and ſeek moſt to ſhift, is that to which you are moſtly called. (2.) As the Foundation and Ground of our Call to believe on Chriſt is God's Word, making it our Duty to believe; ſo the Ground and Call of a Perſon to the Miniſtry is no other than God's Word, ſuch as this, *Occupy till I come*; *Every one, wherein he is called, let him walk with God.* (3.) Such as God calls to preach now, are not called to preach immediately: Much leſs doth the Call of God to preach, actually conſtitute them Miniſters; for then were they Miniſters before they were ordained or elected: But he is called to preach in ſuch a Manner, Method and Order, that is, by the Ordination and Election of the Church; God will have his Power to be conveyed to him in ſuch a Chanel: He will have him indeed preach, but he will firſt have his Gift and Call tried; and, when the Servants of Chriſt have found

found the Lord to have called him, they are authoritatively in the Name of Chriſt to injoin him to the Exerciſe of his Gift, and to publiſh the ſame to the People. (4.) Miniſters ordinarily have great Averſion to the Work of the Miniſtry, it being a difficult Work, and a Work above the Strength of Fleſh and Blood, and expoſing to the Hatred of all Men: And ſuch who find greateſt Inſufficiency in themſelves, and are moſt ſenſible of their Wants, are truly called of God; as *Jeremiah*, who cried he was *a Child*. (5.) Therefore doth the Lord with the very Office, or ſhort Time thereafter, beſtow Qualities and Endowments fitting them for the Service: As it is ſaid of *Saul*, that the Lord did *give him a new Heart* when he made him a King; the Lord many Times in the very Time of Ordination, and thereafter, gives greater Meaſure of Grace and Gifts to his Servant. I cannot ſay but I found a ſenſible Increaſe of Knowledge, Gifts and Graces, from the very Time of my ſetting out, altho' in the very Act of Ordination I did not find theſe Gifts ſenſibly in me, or did not find ſuch a Change: There is ſomething of this therefore in that Expreſſion, *The Gift that was given thee by laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*. Some never find the Furniture till they be engaged in the Work; Increaſe of Gifts and Graces therefore is a Sign of God's Call to the Miniſtry, and Seal thereof.

The Lord calls to and employs Men in the Work of the Miniſtry, whom he never calls *effectually* to be Saints: He makes many in ſome *Meaſure* meet for the Miniſtry, and uſeful to the *Church*, who were never made meet for the King-

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dom of Heaven, elſe Chriſt would never have called *Judas* to be an Apoſtle; altho' ſuch uſually diſcharge their Office neither ſo ſucceſsfully, painfully or comfortably, and, I am ſure, never acceptably. 2. Tho' Hypocrites and Reprobates, whom the Lord Jeſus doth make Uſe of in the Church, may be true and lawful Miniſters, yet cannot it be inſtanced that the Lord Jeſus in Old or New Teſtament did ever commiſſion a ſcandalous, inſufficient or unqualified Perſon, or One known to be a Hypocrite, to ſerve him. 3. I many Times found, that when I thought I was moſt enlarged, and moſt ſenſibly aſſiſted, either in Preaching, or Conference or Prayer, I have done leaſt Good, there have not been ſuch Fruits; and, on the contrary, when I found greateſt Deadneſs and Straitneſs in my Spirit in miniſterial Exerciſes, I found I have done moſt Good: To ſhew we ſhould not truſt in ourſelves, but in the Lord, in whom alone is the Bleſſing, and of whom alone is the Efficacy of Ordinances; and to encourage Miniſters under Indiſpoſitions, and *out of Seaſon*, to be always doing; for they may do moſt Good when they think themſelves leaſt fitted for any ſuch Thing. 4. Sometimes, in the Diſtempers of Spirit, I have ſaid, I will retire and mend my Nets, and for ſometime *hear what the Lord will ſay to me*, and not open my Mouth to ſpeak to others: I have then found it never worſe with me, and my Corruptions and my Confuſions to grow ſtronger upon me; ſo that I have been forced to alter my Reſolutions, and appear in Publick; and by ſtudying of Preachings, and by preaching of them, I have ſenſibly found a Cure

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To draw Souls to, and build them up in Chriſt Jeſus, is and ought to be the great End and Scope of all faithful Miniſters. Chriſt is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of Preaching, he is the Centre where all the Lines ought to meet; and, where Chriſt is not the Senſe and Life of Preaching, we loſe the Text. 16. No Secret or Myſtery is more needful, and a Miniſter ſhould be verſed in or acquainted with, than the Depth of the Covenant of Grace, Chriſt and Faith, the Promiſes and the Law.

CHAP. X.

Of my Marriage, and the Lord's Providences towards me during the Time of my Marriage, which was in the Year 1672, and for ſometime thereafter.

AT that Time the Church of Chriſt had great Reſt and Liberty from Perſecution thro' Variance amongſt the Stateſmen, and Preachers were frequent, yea, the Curates were beginning to leave their Pulpits, I was as buſy as I could amongſt others, and in *Auguſt* had gone North, and diſpatched ſome Buſineſs there; the moſt was to take Courſe with ſome Debts: I returned South, but a violent Perſecution had broken out, and then there began to be Fining, Impriſoning, taking and ſummoning of Perſons, diſturbing of Conventicles with Soldiers. But yet the Goſpel prevailed more and more, and we were like the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, *the more* we *were afflicted*, *the more* we *grew and multiplied*. Some Hot-

Hot-heads were for taking the Sword, and redeeming of themſelves from the Hands of Oppreſſors; at leaſt I had Ground to fear it: But I oppoſed riſing in Arms all I could, and preach'd againſt it, and exhorted them to Patience and couragious uſing of the Sword of the Spirit; and I did not ſee they had any Call to the Sword, that their *Strength was to ſit ſtill:* And, if they did ſtir and take the Sword, they would therewith periſh; but, if they patiently ſuffered and endured, God would himſelf either incline to Pity, or ſome other Way ſupport and deliver them. I had Influence with the People, being popular; and, whilſt I was at Liberty, I did what I could to keep the People peaceable. The Truth is, there were great Provocations given, ſo that we concluded it was the Deſign of ſome Rulers to ſtir us up that we might fall. Miniſters ſtill preach'd and labour'd amongſt the People, Conventicles increaſed, many were brought in; the Work of God in the Midſt of Perſecution did always proſper, until we deſtroyed ourſelves, firſt by needleſs Diviſions and Difference in Opinion happening by reaſon of the Indulgence, and thereafter by raſh and unwarrantable taking up of Arms moſt unſeaſonably in the Year *1679*; when the diſſenting Party, a good Number of them meeting at a Conventicle to worſhip God, being aſſaulted by armed Men, and defending of themſelves, did kill about Thirty Men of their Enemies: With this Succeſs both engaged and heartned, great Numbers gathered together, but not in the Lord's Strength; and there, by their unſeaſonable Diviſions, and Folly of ſome, they were made a Prey to their Enemies, as is fully known.

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The Perſecution became ſo hot in the latter End of the Year 1674, and Beginning of 1675, and always after that, that ſometimes I was in Hazard to be taken preaching. It was then I was intercommuned, with ſome other Miniſters, Gentlemen and Women, yea, ſome Perſons of Quality; but the Lord ſuffered not this Ball, tho' it hit me, to do me Harm: The Goſpel ſtill ſpread, and the People of all ſorts ventured on Converſe with the intercommuned Perſons. O let *my Soul bleſs the Lord, and not* be *forgetful of his Benefits; let me not conceal his Loving-kindneſſes, but ſhew them to the Sons of Men.* Altho' the Lord afflicted me, and kept the Croſs ſtill upon my Back, as I ſaid; yet did he likewiſe remember Mercy, his Mercies were *renewed every Morning* to me. And, 1*ſt*, The Lord ſhewed his Mercy to me, in giving me a comfortable and ſuitable Yoke-fellow, who did me Good and not Evil all the Days of her Life: In her did I behold as in a Glaſs the Lord's Love to me, by her were the Sorrows of my Pilgrimage many Times ſweetned, and ſhe made me frequently forget my Sorrows and Griefs, and was the greateſt Tentation to me of ſaying, *It is good* for me *to be here*; ſo that I can ſeal to the Truth of that, *An Inheritance is from the Fathers, but a good prudent Wife is from the Lord, and whoſo findeth her obtaineth Favour of the Lord.* I had not in herſelf alone a comfortable Relation, but I had very much Love and Reſpect from all her Relations, which were many, and in whoſe Sight I found Favour, that they conſidered me no longer as a Stranger, but as their Brother, and there was nothing but in what I could command them; and many of them being

being Lawiers, Advocates, Clerks and Judges, I had their Service for nought, and glad were they to do me any Good; by them I obtained ſeveral Things, and warded off ſeveral Blows: Nor did their Love die with her, but continued conſtant to this Day, as ready to pleaſure and do for me now as ever; nor know I ſo much as of any one Breach that ever was betwixt us. She was kindly, *the Law of Kindneſs was in her Mouth*; ſhe was prudent and well-bred, ordered her Affairs with great Diſcretion, and by her Wiſdom and Activity did many Things that were fair and lovely to look on; was truly religious, and not only would comply with me in any good Work and ſpiritual Duty, but many Times would aſſiſt, ſtir up, and encourage and remember me of my Duty. 2*dly*, I found much preſerving Mercy from the Lord. I was in great Debts when I married; ſome conſiderable Sums of Money was I bound in, others I was not bound in, but yet were truly owing, but was not able to pay them, being my Father's Debt: Had thoſe Creditors fallen then upon me whiles I was yet tender, they might have undone me, made my Life and my Wife's very uncomfortable to me; but ſuch as I was owing to, the Lord was pleaſed to reſtrain, that they did not proceſs for their Money until I was able to pay them; nor did others ſtir at all of my Creditors, tho' I had Fears they might arreſt Money belonging to my Wife, her Intereſt at leaſt; yet none ever moved. Some tried to do ſomething by Law, but I prevailed againſt them; and my Cauſe ſeemed ſo juſt to the Judges, that they could not harm me; ſo that they agreed with me on what Terms I pleaſed, which was, to pay them

them what and when I was able, and how I was able. Likewiſe, 3*dly*, The Lord was ſo gracious to us, as, altho' I had no gainful Employment, nor ever received a Sixpence for Preaching whilſt in *Scotland*, nor a Gift from any Relation or Friend, that yet, by the Bleſſing of the Lord on our Management, I diſcharged a great Burden of Debt without wronging my Eſtate a Sixpence. In that four Years and an Half's Time, I cleared ſeven or eight hundred Pounds *Sterling* of Debt, which by ſeveral Obligations I was owing to ſeveral Perſons, and did ſettle a Debt, which betwixt Principal and Annualrent amounted to Eight hundred Pounds, for Two hundred. My own Eſtate was not above One hundred, my Mother and publick Duties had yearly Thirty five or Forty Pounds of it, it was not all well paid; I had with my Wife Sixty five Pounds Annuity, beſides One hundred Pounds of Stock; but it is true we got in above Five hundred Pounds of a deſperate Debt we look'd not for. 4*thly*, I look'd on it as a Piece of great Mercy, that I had by my Marriage better and greater Occaſions of ſerving the Lord and his People in the Service of the Goſpel; for, living for the moſt part in the South with my Wife, I had frequent Calls to preach both in the Cities and Country, ſo that few Weeks paſſed that I did not preach twice a Lord's Day, and once every Week beſides, and ſometimes much oſter, and always to great Multitudes, to ſeveral Hundreds in the Cities, and Thouſands in the Country, being much followed where they knew me: There was not ſuch a Door opened in the North. 5*thly*, I increaſed in Grace, Knowledge and Gifts while married, both by exerciſing my Talents faithfully,

ly, and having the Opportunity of hearing the beſt-gifted Men in *Scotland*, by whom I profited both as a Chriſtian and as a Miniſter; and likewiſe by Providences of Mercy and Judgment ſhown me. *6thly*, Many Experiences had I of the Lord's Goodneſs in delivering me out of great Straits; as in ſparing my Wife to me when in great Straits and at the Gates of Death, twice in delivering me from the Hands of the Enemies; tho' intercommuned, yet thereby received no Damage; tho' ſought out to be impriſoned, yet was hid; and, when ſuch as intended to apprehend me were come in where I was preaching, three ſeveral Times was I preſerved from them wonderfully; Money likewiſe to ſupply Wants, and Credit was caſt in to me wonderfully: Eſpecially at two ſeveral Times, when, if a great Sum had not been gotten, I might have been broken, and my Friends with me; but the Lord lent it me, in ſtirring up ſome of whom I did not expect it at all, without any Motion of mine, to offer Money freely to me, and more than would do my Turn. I had likewiſe Experiences of the Lord's hearing of my Prayer very remarkably. And, finally, the Lord was pleaſed to bleſs me with Children; and, I bleſs the Lord, he helped me in ſome Meaſure to carry chriſtianly in a married Relation, making Conſcience of private Duties, having ſometimes very ſweet and Heart-refreſhing Fellowſhip betwixt me and my Wife alone, ſeeing and feeling much of the Lord's Goodneſs vented to me whiles in that Relation, doing nothing, and watching againſt what might ſtain my Credit or Authority either as a Miniſter or a Chriſtian, being preſerved from groſs Pollutions thro' the

Mercy of the Lord. And yet I desire to be humbled, to the justifying of God, and abasing of myself, for great Shortcomings and Failings, of which I was both in the Time and since convinced; as, 1. I was not so useful and profitable to my Wife, Family and Relations as I should and might have been; many one Opportunity had I, which I nowise improved; I cannot tell if any of them hath got Good by me; I was not as the Dew to them. 2. I was not spiritual, but very carnal, in the Use and Enjoyment of lawful Comforts; had many Times a sensual carnal Frame, and designed no spiritual End therein: I did not, *wherein I was called*, walk so closly with the Lord as I should and might. 3. I was by the Pleasures and Satisfaction I found in a married Condition turned off in my Affections and Longings after Heaven, and now I began to see a greater Good on Earth than before, and was in my Heart saying, *'Tis good to be here*; my Heart was glewed to sublunary Enjoyments, and much taken off Christ. 4. I did sometimes perform Family-duty but slightly, and on Haste neglect and omit the same sometimes, and omitted Reading, and speaking from the Word, and Catechising; yea, and omitted many Occasions of spiritual Fellowship with my Wife, altho' the Time spent that Way, and our Fellowship that Way, was the sweetest Part of our married Life.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of my Widowhood, and the Lord's Providences during that Time; together with Obſervations upon my Marriage and Widowhood.

AND now there was an End put to my earthly Joys, my Sun of earthly Proſperity was ſet, and my Nights and *Days of Darkneſs*, and *the Years wherein I have had no Pleaſure in them*, were come; our Sun muſt be overclouded ſometimes. Four Years and a Quarter did I live in a married Condition, *rejoicing with the Wife of my Youth* in the Days of my Vanity, that is, from the latter End of *July* 1672 to the latter End of *October* 1676, at which Time muſt I be a Widower; for then did the *Lord*, who *gave, take away* from me *the Delight of mine Eyes*, and with her all earthly Joys.

I cannot ſay but the Lord gave me ſome Warning of this before it came to paſs. I was threatned in the Year 1673 with this, but the Lord ſpared her for that Time, but it was a mere Suſpenſion: Likewiſe, that Summer before ſhe died, I was then in the North to ſettle ſome Affairs; but a ſudden Damp was upon my Spirit, by which my Spirit was overwhelmed with an unknown Load of Sorrow, and continued for the Space of two whole Days: I hardly during that Time could ſpeak, eat or drink, nor knew I any Cauſe for it; as it came without any Cauſe, ſo within two Days it wore off my Spirit again. Now, theſe Clouds upon my Spirit are always Foretoken-

ners of a ſharp and bitter Storm to blow upon me: The Senſe I many Times had of my ſinful Courſe of Life, my Short-coming, my Diſtance with God, my not improving the Mercies that God gave me, did many Times, with ſome Impreſſion upon my Spirit, preſage the evil Day a-coming; yea, the extraordinary Light and Warmneſs of my Sun did tell me always before a Shower; for truly the Goodneſs of the Lord to me, was my Tentation to fear. How frequently have I ſaid to myſelf, O how do I fear *the Proſperity of Fools* may *deſtroy* me! I perceive all the People of God that I know viſited with Sorrow upon Sorrow, I ſee Lamentation in the *Tabernacles of Jacob*; only I have Peace, increaſe in Riches, Children; have therewith Peace and Quietneſs, Reſpect from others, and what not? Oh, ſurely, if the Lord loves me, if I be not a Baſtard, a Stranger that hath no Lot or Part with the People of God, ſurely I ſhall not be ſuffered to walk in a World alone, but ſhall mourn with Zion; this World ſhall not hold. Thus did I many Times commune with my own Soul, and, as *Job*, ſaid, *I was not at Peace* nor Quietneſs, *yet Trouble came*; and, *The Evil I* greatly *feared was come upon me.* Either, if the Lord loves me (ſaid I) God will ſend ſome painful Sickneſs or Blaſt upon my Eſtate, or I ſhall fall into the Hands of the Ungodly, or my Wife ſhall be taken from me; ſome Awakning or other I ſhall have, that I know. And accordingly, in the Beginning of *October* 1676, having a Call to *Northumberland* in order to do ſomething (which, after I enquir'd the Lord, I was free to do) my Wife ſickned of a Fever, and ſome eight or nine Days there-

thereafter ſhe died, in vain calling for me during a great Part of the Time of Sickneſs, who was then ſome fifty or ſixty Miles from her, and knew nothing; Letters were ſent to me, but came too late, only a Day before ſhe died; and, having made what Haſte I could after I once underſtood ſhe was ſick, I came and found her dead ſome four Hours before. I indeed remember I was, when abſent at that Time, ſtirred up extraordinarily to mind her in Prayer; and, about the very Time ſhe was a dying, an extraordinary Cloud of Horrour ſeized upon me, being then within twelve Miles of my Journey to our own Houſe.

Obſervations upon my Marriage and Widowhood.

'TIS good for either Man or Woman to be firſt married and engaged with Chriſt ere they be engaged with any other, otherwiſe we ſhall never carry well in a Marriage-State: When once the Heart hath made its Choice, 'tis hardly brought to chuſe Chriſt; and therefore our Days of Youth are Days of Choice, in which we are to *remember our Creator*, Eccl. xii. 1. The Lord was merciful to me, in engaging me with Chriſt ere I ſettled any other Way, *Mat.* vi. ult. *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of Heaven.* 2. 'Tis not convenient, I think, that People not come to the Years of Diſcretion ſhould marry; I was thirty two Years of Age when I married, and needed all the Wiſdom and Experience that by Age I acquired to manage a married Lot. 3. As in all our Ways we ſhould ac-

knowledge the Lord, ſo eſpecially in going about Marriage, that we may marry *in the Lord*. For many Years before I had Thoughts of Marriage, I earneſtly beſought the Lord, that ever if I ſhould change my Relation and Manner of living, that he would give me a comfortable Yoke-fellow; And, when the Lord opened a Door, I durſt not ſo much as make a Viſit without Prayer; and I ſet a whole Day apart before I did propoſe Marriage to my Wife, to know the Lord's Mind whether I ſhould go on or not, and to ſeek his Bleſſing in caſe I ſhould ſee it of the Lord to go on. 4. The great End of Marriage is to get a *meet Help* for furthering of the Soul's Condition and ſpiritual Concernment: We are not therefore to match ourſelves any Way but ſuch as may be conducible to that End; other Ends and Advantages are to be ſubordinate to this. 5. Therefore doth it much concern us, that the Perſon we marry be a prudent, pious and virtuous Perſon: Fools, or graceleſs Perſons, we can never expect to be helpful to us this Way; 'tis dreadful to take a Lump of Wrath in our Boſom. He that marrieth a prudent, godly Woman, is ſure to have the Lord himſelf to his Father-in-law. The Seed of the Woman and of the Serpent can never agree, dwell, and walk together; nor can an Ox and an Aſs, yoked together, draw equally. 6. It is abſolutely neceſſary that thoſe we marry be Perſons of good moral Parts, and eſpecially that they be not of a croſs but good Humour naturally, and that they have ſome good Meaſure of Prudence; without theſe two you cannot live *comfortably*: Yea, Grace, tho' I confeſs it makes *Fools* (even naturally ſo) wiſer, and makes the

rugged

rugged Lions eat Graſs like Oxen, yet it doth not deſtroy Nature; and, if there be not the ſtricter Watch, it will vent, and cauſe Diſorders in the Family. That we live religiouſly, and to God, we owe it to Grace; but that, as Men and Women, we live in external Peace, and comfortably, is much from Prudence and good natural Humour. 7. 'Tis a marvellous and a bleſſed Thing, where God is pleaſed to unite in the Bonds of Love firſt theſe he in his Providence is pleaſed to join in Marriage: This is the Bleſſing of the Lord upon a Marriage-condition; This is it which makes the Married walk faithfully, in ſweet ſpiritual Communion with God, in joint ſpiritual Duties and Exerciſes, and which makes it ſo comfortable; and this I found by Experience. I found much Sweetneſs in ſpiritual Fellowſhip with my Wife; the pleaſanteſt Time we ever had was theſe few Hours we ſpent together in Prayer, in reading the Word, and the making of obſervable Things out of it, in ſpiritual Conference, and joint binding of ourſelves to the Lord, in all which I found her very cordial; nor can I ſay I found Fellowſhip with any other ſo ſweet as with her. What a great Advantage is it, and how neceſſary, to be united by Love with theſe with whom we join in Fellowſhip! 8. Grace makes Perſons not only good Chriſtians, but good in all Relations. To ſay, a good Woman, but a bad Wife; a gracious Man, but a mighty croſs, peeviſh, ſullen Husband; a holy Man, but a wonderfully bad Maſter, or undutiful Servant, is that which I truly think cannot be: And however ſome have very confidently endeavoured to make it out to me by ſeveral Inſtances, yet truly, what-

ever may be Truth in it, I could never yet ſee through or underſtand how it could be. 9. Marriage is one of the moſt important Steps of a Man's Life: O then, with what Fear and Trembling and godly Dependence ſhould we go about ſuch a Matter! I ſhall never forget what a Miniſter ſaid when marrying two certain Perſons, *viz.* That Repentance mends all Things but an ill-made Marriage; it is either a Mean of the greateſt Comfort or Sorrow. 10. If any Perſon be uncomfortably yoked, they may thro' Grace be profitably yoked. To marry an ill, croſs and rugged Perſon is indeed grievous; but it may be and has been bleſſed of God as the Mean of greateſt Good. Thus, I thought, I was thereby encouraged againſt terrible Effects of a bad Choice; Well, ſaid I, if I fall not well, ſure I am I ſhall thereby have the beſt Opportunity and Advantage to be mortified to the World that ever I had, and an ill Wife may do that Good for me which all my former Afflictions could not do. 11. I have obſerved, that ſeveral gracious Perſons have been very unequally yoked with graceleſs Perſons, and that to be the ſad Lot rather of poor Women than of Men; and yet this hath been bleſſed of God to them, and they helped to carry well under it. 12. A Marriage-condition or State is both a bleſſed and comfortable State, and alſo a State liable to many Inconveniencies; I found this Fountain to *ſend forth bitter and ſweet.* As it was a Life of much Contentment, and as I ſaw much of the Love and Goodneſs of God, ſo did I ſee the ſame ſeaſoned with many Ingredients, Cares, and vexing Fears, that I never found in a ſingle State; ſo that,

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if I were abſent for four or five Days, it was a Terror to me to enter into the Family, leſt I ſhould hear or know that either Wife or Children were unwel. 13. Altho' Marriage be ordained for preventing of Fornication and burning Luſt, 1 *Cor.* vii. 4. and for begetting of Children to furniſh the Church with an holy Seed, yet are they not the only great Ends of Marriage; for aged Perſons that cannot get Children, and ſuch as never found theſe violent Deſires, may lawfully marry, and that for the great End of Marriage, which is to have a ſuitable Help, a ſuitable Companion, who may in our Pilgrimage be comfortable to us, and help us in our Way to Heaven. 14. Altho' Increaſe of Wealth or paying of Debts be the ordinary great End of Marriage, with Continuance of our Names; yet do I think it the meaneſt of Ends: And juſt it is (as ordinary) with God to make the Marriage of ſuch uncomfortable, and to deprive them of the true Comforts and Bleſſings thereof, who have their Eyes ſo much thereupon. This I may ſay, Riches were not my Aim, having preferred her whom I have married to ſeveral with greater Portions, and in other Things not inferior to her, ſave only in Virtue and Piety. 15. It is a very hard Thing to guide a Marriage-lot, and to walk prudently and in Knowledge, to keep ſuch a ſpiritual Frame as to poſſeſs our Veſſels in Holineſs, and, like *Enoch*, to beget Sons and Daughters, and walk with God. Alas! I know not how to walk perfectly *in a perfect Way*, nor how to behave wiſely in my Houſe: I many Times omitted Opportunities of doing Good, ſlighted others; many Times ſlightly and perfunctoriouſly went

about

about Family-duties, was carnal and exceſſive, was ſolliſh in many Things; yea, the Comforts of a preſent Life, Wife, Children and Relations, did blunt my Deſire after Heaven, and I began to ſay in my Heart, *It is good to be here.* 16. Over-valued Comforts are ſhortned, and a Worm comes and conſumes them, ſo that they wither to the Ground. 17. Loſs of Comforts is as bitter, yea, much more than ever they were comfortable when enjoyed. As I much comforted myſelf in ſuch a comfortable Yoke-fellow, ſo it was exceeding bitter when the Lord wither'd ſuch a Gourd, *Jonah* iv. 6, 7. 17. Mercies obtain'd by, and received as the Fruit of Prayer, are double Mercies. What was comfortable and uſeful to me in a Yoke-fellow, I obtained by Prayer. 18. I think it a greater Sin to marry on the Lord's Day than to yoke a Plough, inaſmuch as the Work and Concern is greater; and I judge it to be one of the provoking Profanations of the Lord's Day, the ſinful Continuance of this; and I ſeldom ever ſee theſe Marriages bleſſed that were celebrated on that Day: They muſt be ſtrangely mortified Creatures, that do not *find their own Pleaſures that Day.* I never durſt do, or adviſe to it. I'm hardly free for Miniſters to marry Perſons: To give them Exhortations, and to ſeek a Bleſſing upon them, I think very commendable; but to miniſter in the Action, Ceremony and Rite, which is the Badge of that Relation, I think is no more competent to him, than to give a Saſine in Land. Yet, as Times go now, I think it not altogether unlawful to marry by a Miniſter; but it were to be wiſhed this and other Things were reformed, which as they are Relicks of

of *Popery*, ſo do they tend to beget in us an Opinion of Marriage being a Sacrament, ſeeing Miniſters only adminiſter it; and commonly People think, that if Miniſters do not marry them, that they are not married at all: And this likewiſe begets the Marrying on the Lord's Day, ſeeing they take it for ſome ſpiritual Action, performable only by Miniſters. Other Things I might obſerve, but, fearing Tedioufneſs, I here end this Chapter.

CHAP. XII.
Of my Sufferings.

SECT. I.
Of my publick Sufferings in general.

IT pleaſed the Lord, not only to exerciſe me with perſonal Afflictions; but likewiſe, for purging away and healing of my Corruptions, for Trial and Exerciſe of my Faith, Patience and Sincerity, for humbling of me, and for manifeſting his Purity and Holineſs, and for Confirmation and ſealing of God's Truth and Ways, to honour me with publick Sufferings for his Name; by being reproached, oppreſſed and wronged, intercommuned, troubled with Citations before Courts on that account, wandring from Place to Place many Times for fear of my Life, impriſoned, fined and baniſhed, and threatned with Death itſelf.

The Cauſe and Occaſion of my Sufferings was, Diſſenting from, and Nonconformity to, the Govern-

Government of Prelacy in the Church; for not coming to Church to hear ſuch Miniſters and Officers as did officiate by an unlawful (to me) Authority; for adhering to the perſecuted, deſerted Party, who ſtood upon their former Ground, cleaving to their former Principles; and for taking upon me to preach without the Biſhop's Authority. This in ſhort Time expoſed me to the Laſh of the Laws againſt Diſſenters, and Malice of the Biſhops, whoſe Principles, Ways, Courſes and Office I was convinced were not of God, and by Inſtinct was averſe to: For as to any other Thing, whether Immorality or Sedition, I could not be charged therewith, being as to Man unblamable, of ſufficiently loyal Principles, and kept from having Hand in or Concurrence with any publick Inſurrection that was; ſo that there was nothing that could be laid to my Charge but as concerning my God and Conſcience.

It is true, the very Profeſſion of Religion did expoſe me to Perſecution, *viz.* to Reproach and Contempt, and made me not willing to bring my Cauſe to their corrupt Judicatories, chooſing rather to ſuffer by unprofitable Terms of Peace, than to bring my Cauſe before them to be heard publickly; for I knew both my Perſon and Principles were unfavourable, and therefore doubted much of the Iſſue of my Cauſe.

Hitherto my Troubles reached none but myſelf; but now, being married, they reached others: For within a very few Days after we were married, and were preparing to go to the North, a Meſſenger came with a Summons to me to appear before the Council for keeping of Conventicles. The Biſhop of *Murray*, in whoſe Diocy

I had preached, and a Privy Counſellor, for ſome Pick he had at my Wife, did cauſe me this Trouble. I was herewith troubled; but my Wife's Friends, to whom I communicate the Matter, dealt with the Meſſenger to take off his Summons, and to lay on a new Summons when we were to the North, where we were to be in a Day or two, and then indorſe on the Back of his Execution, that he found us not, which would make a new Summons neceſſary; and he did ſo. My Adverſaries were enraged at this, and, diſdaining to be thus outwitted, cauſed ſend One hundred and ſixty Miles a new Summons, which, within two Months after we were come North, came to our Hand: I was therewith much troubled on my Wife's Account, fearing that the Publick would ſeize upon any Thing belonging to her; however, I prayed to the Lord, and ſought Advice what do, whether I ſhould anſwer the Council's Citation (as my Friends adviſed me) or not, and take my Hazard. The Lord was pleaſed to clear it to me, that I was not to anſwer the Citation, which Light I followed; upon which I was denounced and outlawed. My Wife was very cheerful under this. Within a ſhort Time thereafter we came South; and then, underſtanding who were the Authors of my Troubles, I thought it Wiſdom to take them off; and, for this Effect, employed ſuch as had greateſt Influence with the Privy Counſellor to deal with him to abſtain from ſuch a Matter and Action ſo far below him, I likewiſe came myſelf and ſpoke to him; and the Lord bleſſed the Means uſed ſo effectually, that he fell off, putting all the Blame on the Biſhop, and was ever thereafter a good

Friend

Friend to me; and, having the Executions delivered him, he would never give them up, by which Means they came to nothing, and finally were altogether forgotten.

After this there was *Silence in Heaven for Half an Hour*, but then the Angels of War did ſound their Trumpets; and amongſt other Miniſters was I ſought for, and of new denounced; was many Times, while in the South, made to ſhift my Lodging; was frequently in Fears and Alarms, and preached in great Tentations thro' the lying in wait of Enemies; was ſeveral Times interrupted in the very Act of Preaching by Soldiers that by Orders came to apprehend me; I could get no Buſineſs done. The Lord by this did only manifeſt his Goodneſs in preſerving and delivering me, rendering Enemies who did forbid us to preach inexcuſable, by this cauſing them fill up the Meaſure of their Iniquities; my Spirit by theſe Toſſings was rather diſtempered and jumbled than bettered.

SECT. II.

Of my being Intercommuned.

THE Biſhops and other wicked Men perceiving all this Time that they *laboured in the Fire*, for the Number of Diſſenters increas'd, and the Goſpel ſpread further and further notwithſtanding of all the violent Means that were uſed for ſuppreſſing it and the Profeſſors thereof, they bethink themſelves of *intercommuning* the chief Miniſters that were moſt active in Preaching, and the chief Profeſſors both Gentlemen and others, to the Number of between three

or

or four hundred in the firſt or ſecond Intercommuning. It was a publick Writ, ſerved by King and Council's Authority, ſtraitly diſcharging, under higheſt Pains, all his Majeſty's Subjects to converſe or ſpeak with, harbour or receive into their Houſes, or adminiſter any Comfort to, the Perſons in the Writ particularly expreſſed; This was proclaimed and printed: And thus for naked Preaching were we proceſs'd as Murderers and Traitors, for ſuch were only in uſe to be intercommuned. They thought this would keep the People from us, or force us, finding no Shelter, to remove out of the Land; and make us as Ducks to decoy others, who, could they be proven to have received or harboured us, were fineable at the Council's Pleaſure, and to be in the ſame Circumſtances which we were in ourſelves. I was through the Malice of the Biſhops put in with others; for they knew that I was againſt the very Hearing of their Miniſters, and had ſeveral Times preached in the Fields, and was very popular; they imagined alſo my Parts were greater than they were: And therefore, tho' ſome Friends dealt that I might not be intercommuned, yet could not prevail; the Biſhops would have it ſo.

Altho' this ſeemed to be the firſt Storm of Perſecution that yet had fallen upon us, and that now the Adverſaries had boaſted of an effectual Mean for ſuppreſſing Conventicles, and eſtabliſhing Prelacy and Uniformity, and that good People feared it; yet the Lord did wonderfully diſappoint them, and made and turned their witty Counſels into Folly; for this great Noiſe harmed not at all, it was Powder without Ball: For, as

for

for myſelf, never one that cared for me ſhunned my Company; yea, a great many mere carnal Relations and Acquaintances did entertain me as freely as ever they did; yea, ſo far did the Goodneſs of the Lord turn this to my Good, that I obſerved it was at that Time I got moſt of my civil Buſineſs expede: And as the Lord preſerved myſelf in this Storm, ſo I did not hear of any Intercommuned, or Converſers with intercommuned Perſons, that were in the leaſt prejudiced thereby; nay, this Matter of the Intercommuning of ſo many good and peaceable Men did but exaſperate the People againſt the Biſhops the more, and procured to them, as the Authors of ſuch rigid Courſes, a greater and more univerſal Hatred; ſo that the whole Land groned to be delivered from them.

SECT. III.

Of my firſt Impriſonment in the Baſs.

SOME two Years and a Half did I continue intercommuned diſcharging the Commiſſion I had received from the Lord Jeſus in great Weakneſs, I confeſs (yet deſiring to ſerve the Lord better, and humbled and grieved upon the Account of my great Failing) and in manifold Tentations thro' the lying in wait of theſe who hunted after me: For the Biſhops knowing that I was a rigid Nonconformiſt, who had not Freedom to have any ſpiritual Communion with their Church, and that I laboured to keep ſome halting betwixt two Opinions, from joining with them, and to divert others from their (ſuppoſed by me) moſt ſinful Communion; and imagining me

me to be of ſome Parts, and very active in preaching in the Fields, and keeping up the *Seceſſion* as they called it; they therefore did ſtir up the King's Council againſt me, repreſenting me to them as a Perſon of very diſloyal Principles and Practices; ſo as there was a particular Eye upon me, and I was one of the Three that a conſiderable Sum of Money was profered for apprehending of, to any Perſon, altho' nothing could be laid to my Charge of Sedition or Inſurrection, but only that I preached without the Biſhops Authority, and had Influence to keep ſuch of the Nation as I had Influence upon, or converſed with, from going alongſt or joining with the publick Courſes eſtabliſhed by Law. Many Attempts were made againſt me, which for ſome Years I eſcaped: At laſt the Major of the Town of *Edinburgh*, being ſolicited by the Archbiſhop, and encouraged and importuned thereto by the Promiſes of great Rewards and Acknolwedgments, did on the Lord's Day's Night, being the 28th *January* 1677, by the Treachery of a Servant-maid whom for Money he had corrupted, who, being a Servant-maid to a Relation in whoſe Houſe I ordinarily preach'd, had Knowledge of my coming and going; thus betrayed, I was apprehended by the ſaid Major about Ten a-Clock at Night which was the Time the Maid had appointed him to come to her Maſter's Houſe where I was for that Day, as I was, after Supper, recommending the Houſe and Family to God by Prayer; I was then interrupted and carried to Priſon. I did not think fit to reſiſt, leſt ſome Friends and Relations which were with me might be made to ſuffer.

He who apprehended me went immediately to the Archbiſhop, and told him the News of my Apprehenſion, with which the Archbiſhop was greatly rejoiced, and, by giving ſome ſmall Token at preſent, and Promiſes of greater Reward, diſmiſs'd the Major. The Archbiſhop, overjoyed with his imaginary Succeſs and Proſperity in apprehending me, longed for the next Day impatiently, on which, ſo ſoon as it did dawn, he (being a Counſellor) ſent Order to the Jaylor that I ſhould be kept cloſs, and none ſuffered to have Acceſs to me, which was done, until ſome of the Counſellors in a Committee met the ſame Night, before whom at Five a-Clock at Night I appeared, where I was examined, and verbally charged as a ſeditious Perſon, who did rent the Church of Chriſt, and was very active to make and keep up the Schiſm; as a Preacher in Field-conventicles, which was Death by the Law; which they gladly would have me acknowledge, as likewiſe who they were that impowered me to preach: That I was intercommuned, and deſpiſed the Law ſo far as I never made any Application to be freed from that Sentence: And that I was a Perſon of very bad Principles, deſtructive to all Government. And thereupon the Archbiſhop, who thereby thought to enſnare me by my own Words, enquired, Whether I judged it lawful upon Pretence of Religion to take up Arms againſt the King's Majeſty? This was the Sum: And that I kept Correſpondence with ſome Priſoners in the *Baſs*, which the Archbiſhop confidently averred he knew. Theſe Things were not charged upon me all at once, but in a confuſed Way; and many Things by way of Queſtion.

ſtion. I cannot ſay of any of the Committee of the Council, but they were all civil and ſober Perſons, of whom, if the Inſtigation and Fear of the Archbiſhop had not prevailed with them, I might have been moderately dealt with: But he did, in a bitter invective Oration, repreſent me as a very odious and criminal Perſon to the other Counſellors, and aggravated my alledged Crimes vehemently. To all which I replied, That I did acknowledge I was (tho' moſt unworthy) a Miniſter of the Goſpel; and that I indeed preached frequently, as the Lord called me, and independently on the Biſhop: That the Subjects of my Diſcourſes and Sermons were not diſloyal and traiterous Principles and Aſſertions, as the Archbiſhop did alledge, but, according as I was helped, I preached *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards Jeſus Chriſt*, and no other Thing than what was contained in the Prophets and the New Teſtament: That I was ſo far from being terrified or aſhamed to own that I was a Miniſter of Chriſt, that altho' I was of no deſpicable Extraction, yet that I gloried moſt in, and counted it the greateſt Honour I ever attained, to *ſerve God in the Goſpel of his Son*: That I never preached nor ſtirred up the People to Sedition, and was indifferent tho' the Principles of my Heart were as viſible and perceptible to their Lordſhips as the external Lineaments and Tracts of my Face, ſo as they might read what was engraven upon my Heart: That for riſing up in Arms againſt the King upon Pretext or Pretence of Religion, which the Archbiſhop alledged I maintained, I told him he was therein abuſed by his Inferiors; for I never knew of any, even the

moſt zealous Aſſerters of the Liberties of the People, that did maintain Riſing in Arms upon Pretence of Religion, Pretences giving no Ground or Warrant for any Man's Action: That Matters of Prerogative and Privileges were Things of a tickliſh and thorny Nature, and of which for the preſent I deſired not to give my Thoughts, not judging the ſame within my Sphere now, nor called to meddle with: That, for ſuch as did ordain me, I was not free to tell them, leſt thereby I ſhould bring others to Trouble, altho' I ſhould be moſt free as to Matters concerning myſelf: That as I judged it not unlawful to preach the Goſpel either in Houſes or Fields as Conveniency did offer, but Duty, and an Ordinance of Chriſt's (ſo far was I from judging thoſe Meetings *Rendeſvouzes of Rebellion*, as the Archbiſhop termed them) ſo did I not acknowledge I at any Time did preach in the Fields; and if they thirſted after my Life, to take it away upon that Account, they could not expect I ſhould give or reach the Weapon wherewith to deſtroy myſelf, or that I ſhould be either Witneſs or Accuſer againſt myſelf, in a Matter the Law had made ſo criminal; and therefore for them to ſeek their Proof and Evidence elſewhere than from myſelf, for I was reſolved none living ſhould be able to make me guilty of ſuch a Weakneſs: That as for Correſpondence with any in the *Baſs*, which the Archbiſhop alledged, I declared, that, notwithſtanding the Biſhop's bold and confident aſſerting the contrary, there was no ſuch Thing; and, if there were, I ſhould be content to ſuffer the ſevereſt Puniſhments: I denied the Charge of Schiſm, and left it to be proven by the Biſhop:

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That, for my Intercommuning, I was then Seven-ſcore Miles off when it was paſſed, and knew not of it, till I ſaw my Name in the printed Papers, and ſo could not prevent it; and, after I was intercommuned, I could not get any Perſon that would ſo much as draw a Petition up for me, being ſtrictly charged to the contrary; and that from this, and Fear of further Prejudice, and not from the Contempt of the Law, it was that I did not move to have myſelf taken out of the Letters of Intercommuning. In this and in all the Premiſſes I was free and ingenuous with them; That I came not to juſtify my Breeding before their Lordſhips, for I acknowledged I was a rude Man (for one of the Lords challenged me of Unmannerlineſs and Ill-breeding, that gave not the Archbiſhop his Titles.) And finally, That I was now in their Lordſhips Power, and ready to ſubmit to whatſoever their Lordſhips ſhould determine concerning me.

After this I was remanded to Priſon again, but ordered to be kept more ſtraitly than formerly: For my Pockets were ſearched for Letters, Knives; Ink, Paper and Pen were taken and kept from me; all Company diſcharged: Which filled me with ſome melancholly Apprehenſions. But in my Darkneſs was the Lord a Light round about me; him they could not ſhut out from me: For that Night did I get a moſt kindly and comfortable Viſit from the Lord Jeſus, and I had one of the moſt ſweet Nights I had for ten Years before that; and lifted up, by the Senſe of the Lord's Love and Favour, above Death, Sin, Hell, Wrath, Prelates and Papiſts, about One or Two a-Clock in the Morning I fell in a ſound Sleep,

until, a little before Six a-Clock, I was awakned by one of the Jaylors, who cried to me to make myſelf ready againſt Six a-Clock to go to the *Baſs*, for ſo the Council had determined: Which I very cheerfully obeyed; and ſo, with another Perſon that was Priſoner with me, was I by a Guard of twelve Horſe and thirty Foot convoyed to the *Baſs*, where we ſafely landed upon *Wedneſday* Morning (being one Night by the Way) and were delivered to the Cuſtody of the Officer of that Place, who commanded as Governor therein a Garriſon of ſome eighteen or twenty Soldiers.

The *Baſs* is a very high Rock in the Sea, two Miles diſtant from the neareſt Point of the Land which is South of it; covered it is with Graſs on the uppermoſt Parts thereof, where is a Garden where Herbs grow, with ſome Cherry-trees, of the Fruit of which I ſeveral Times taſted. Below which Garden there is a Chaple for Divine Service; but, in regard no Miniſter was allowed for it, the Ammunition of the Garriſon was kept therein. Landing here is very difficult and dangerous; for, if any Storm blow, ye cannot enter becauſe of the Violence of the ſwelling Waves, which beat with a wonderful Noiſe upon the Rock, and ſometimes in ſuch a violent Manner, that the broken Waves, reverberating on the Rock with a mighty Force, have come up over the Walls of the Garriſon on the Court before the Priſoners Chambers, which is above twenty Cubits Height: And with a full Sea muſt you land; or, if it be ebb, you moſt be either cranned up, or climb with Hands and Feet up ſome Steps artificially made on the Rock, and muſt have Help beſides of theſe

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who are on the Top of the Rock, who pull you up by the Hand: Nor is there any Place of landing but one about the whole Rock, which is of Circumference ſome three Quarters of a Mile; here you may land in a fair Day and full Sea without great Hazard, the reſt of it on every Side being ſo high and ſteep: Only, on the South-Side thereof, the Rock falls a little level, where you aſcend ſeveral Steps till you come to the Governor's Houſe, and from that ſome Steps higher you aſcend to a level Court, where a Houſe for Priſoners and Soldiers is; whence likewiſe, by Windings cut out of the Rock, there is a Path leading you to the Top of the Rock, whoſe Height doth bear off all North, Eaſt and Weſt Storms, lying open only to the South; and on the uppermoſt Parts of the Rock there is Graſs ſufficient to feed Twenty or Twenty four Sheep, who are there very fat and good. In theſe uppermoſt Parts of the Rock were ſundry Walks, of ſome Threeſcore Foot Length, and ſome very ſolitary, where we ſometimes entertained ourſelves. The acceſſible Places were defended with ſeveral Walls and Cannon placed on them, which compaſſed only the South Parts. The reſt of the Rock is defended by Nature, by the huge Height and Steepneſs of the Rock, being ſome Forty Cubits high in the loweſt-Place. It was a Part of a Country-gentleman's Inheritance, which falling from Hand to Hand, and changing many Maſters, it was at laſt bought by the King, who repaired the old Houſes and Walls, and built ſome new Houſes for Priſoners; and a Garriſon of Twenty or Twenty four Soldiers therein are ſufficient, if couragious, to defend it from Milions of Men,

and only expugnable by Hunger. 'Tis commanded by a Lieutenant, who does reap thereby ſome conſiderable Profit, which, beſides his Pay, may be One hundred Pounds a Year and better. There is no Fountain-water therein, and they are only ſerved with Rain that falls out of the Clouds, and is preſerved in ſome hollow Caverns digged out of the Rock. Their Drink and Proviſions are carried from the other Side by a Boat, which only waits on the Garriſon, and hath a Sallary of Six Pounds yearly for keeping up the ſame, beſides what they get of theſe Perſons that come either to ſee the Priſoners, or are curious to ſee the Garriſon. Here Fowls of ſeverals Sorts are to be found, who build in the Clifts of the Rock; the moſt conſiderable of which is the *Solan-gooſe*, whoſe Young well fledged, ready to fly, are taken, and ſo yield near One hundred Pounds yearly, and might be much more, were they carefully improved.

To this melancholly Place I came, and continued there in Priſon for two Years and a Half; for I came in *January* 1677, and came out in *July* 1679. And here I had likewiſe Experience of the Goodneſs of God towards me; and, 1. In providing for me, without being chargeable to any for ſuch Things as I ſtood in Need of. 2. In preſerving and ſupporting me under great Preſſures of Spirit from Sin, Sufferings, Tentations, Griefs, Sorrows, and Untenderneſs of Brethren and Friends, ſo as I was not therewith overwhelmed. 3. In preſerving me in Health all that Time. 4. That in this Time, partly by ſelling Houſhold-pleniſhing, and improving of my

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Eſtate, I paid and cleared One hundred Pounds of Debts. 5. I had the Comfort and Edification of Fellow-priſoners, both Miniſters and others, ſome there before me, and others brought in ſince my coming, whoſe Company was ſweet and edifying many Times to me. 6. We had Liberty, for the moſt part, of taking the Air up the Hill; my ſolitary Walks were ſometimes very pleaſant to me. 7. I had the Comfort of Friends, that came in Kindneſs to ſee us from the City and Country. 8. I had ſome ſpecial Viſits from God, ordinarily in private Duties, and ſometimes in Worſhipping and Conference with others. 9. Some Increaſe (I think) I found in Giſts, Knowledge and Grace; ſome further Diſcoveries of the Knowledge of Chriſt and the Goſpel I never had before. 10. I was made ſome way uſeful by writing of Letters abroad, praying with, and preaching to, and Conference with others. 11. And that I had a cleanly unexpected Deliverance from this ſad Place. 12. Some Improvement I made of this Price that was put in my Hand, through Grace that helped me; this I think I was bound to take Notice of, and be thankful for to the Lord.

As for my Exerciſes here, and Improvement of my Time; I judged, when I firſt came here, that I was called to ſome Work and Improvement of this Price put in my Hand: And therefore did I, 1. Exerciſe myſelf in lamenting my Sins, and miſpent Life, and great Shortcoming. 2. I laboured after, and deſired, ſome further Knowledge of God and Chriſt and Grace, and to glorify God in my Sufferings. 3. Some Hours, Morning and Evening and Mid-day, I ſpent in Meditation, in Praiſing, and reading the Scripture, for keeping

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up and increaſing Communion with God, and Increaſe of Grace, and this conſtantly; beſides ſeveral Faſt-Days, which were my ſweeteſt Seaſons and beſt Times. 4. Every Day I read the Scriptures, exhorted and taught therefrom, did ſing Pſalms, and pray'd with ſuch of our Society as our Maſters did allow and permit to worſhip God together; and this two Times a-Day. 5. I ſtudied *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and gained ſome Knowledge in theſe Oriental Languages. 6. I likewiſe read ſome Divinity, and wrote a Treatiſe of *Faith*, with ſome other Miſcellanies, and ſeveral Letters to Chriſtian Friends and Relations. Thus I ſpent my Time, and not without ſome Fruit.

But Priſons muſt be Priſons, and all Afflictions, tho' never ſo well ſweetned, will be in ſome Meaſure grievous. Tho' the Lord was pleaſed to *ſtay his rough Wind in the Day of his Eaſt-wind*, and to put a very light Yoke upon our Necks; yet was it ſtill a Yoke, and ſome bitter Ingredients were mixed in this Cup, ſomething of the Gall and Vinegar we found; both that the Lord might diſcover and manifeſt to the World the cruel and unclean Nature of the Spirit of Prelacy, and that our Patience and Faith might be the better exerciſed, and our Faithfulneſs to Chriſt, and finally to wean us from the World, and ſweeten to us the Love of God in ſupporting under ſuch Troubles and delivering us out of them: For, 1. It could not be but ſad to me and my Brethren to think that we were caſt out of the Vineyard, and become uſeleſs, our Commiſſion taken from us, and could not glorify God as we had done. 2. Abſence from natural

and

and civil Relations and Friends was bitter, whoſe Company was ſweet, and which now we could not enjoy: Now we might ſay, *Lover and Friend haſt thou removed from us*, Pſal. lxxviii. *ult.* 3. The Company of the Ungodly, to whoſe Hands we were delivered, and who ruled over us, who knew nothing of God, but were Enemies to him, was grievous; that we lived among Lions, Wolves and Serpents, and dwelt in the Tents of *Kedar*. 4. It was then *the Days of old, when the Candle of God ſhined upon our Tabernacle, when my* Wife, *Children* and Relations *were about me*; when *I went with the Multitude that kept holy Days*: Then (I ſay) did theſe Things of old come and aſſault my Remembrance with a ſenſible affecting Grief. 5. Our own Servants were turned out from us, and we made to ſeek Servants whom we knew not; but this turned to our Good and great Advantage. 6. The great Comfort that we had in worſhipping of God together, and in eating together, was taken away from us by the Folly and Fears of ſome, and Envy and Malice of others, who grudged us this Comfort, and who ruled us, and made us ſeparate in Worſhip and Diet, and would not ſuffer us to come together; whereby our Expences were much increaſed, and we deprived of the Benefit of the Variety of Gifts. 7. Our Letters that came to us, or were ſent by us, were all looked many Times, tho' they had no Orders for it. 8. Our Drink was dear and exceeding bad, and we behoved to take it from our Governors, and pay exorbitantly for it. 9. Sometimes, when they would take it in their Heads, they would ſhut us all cloſs up, and not ſuffer any of us to ſpeak to another;

another; and this not only without, but contrary to, the Council's Order, who committed us free Priſoners, and to have the Liberty of the Rock. This unwarranted Reſtraint did ſometimes afflict us, but our Patience overcame it. 10. They vexed us by mixing in our Company, and there blaſpheming ſometimes; and other Times ſeeking to enſnare us by the Words of our Lips, and tabling Diſcourſe of publick Matters, which, ſeeing their malicious Ends, we ſhunned. 11. They laboured to debauch our Servant-maids, the Governor's Son offering Ten Shillings to a Soldier if he could get ſuch a Perſon with Child who ſerved ſome of us, of Purpoſe to reflect upon us; and which he effected, and was thereupon by the Soldier challenged for his Promiſe; inſomuch that we could hardly get a Servant-maid to wait upon us. 12. They by Force and Power kept the poor Soldiers and others from converſing with or hearing us on the Lord's Day, altho' the poor Creatures would gladly have heard us. 13. At the ſame Time, likewiſe, I was very untenderly handled by ſome falſe Brethren engaged in the ſame publick Cauſe with ourſelves. 14. We were ſometimes in Winter and Spring very hardly put to it for want of Victuals and Drink, inſomuch that we had no other than Snow-water or corrupted Water ſprinkled over with a little Oat-meal to drink, and ſome dry Fiſh: Theſe with other Things made our Lives ſomething, and at ſomtimes, bitter to us.

We continued thus ſome of us two Years and a Half. While the Archbiſhop lived, no Intermiſſion or Mediation of Friends could get me out, altho' ſeveral Means were tried, which all proved

ved ineffectual; the Council not accepting the Engagements I would give, which were no other than compearing when called; and I refuſing their Terms, which were, that I ſhould not preach in the Fields any more, and that I ſhould live peaceable and orderly according to Law: Yet the Lord was pleaſed to anſwer my Mind in ſome Meaſure, that I ſhould come out, and be delivered, and that by giving great Liberty and Freedom to pray for it, and aſſuring and filling my Soul with the Hopes and Faith of it, altho' for a great while I could not pray for my Deliverance. At another Time the Lord was pleaſed to renew my Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel, even a Year before I was delivered; which made me think, and write to my Friends, that I ſhould be delivered. And, *Laſtly*, I was made (from *Jonah* ii. ult. *And God ſpake to the Fiſh, and it vomited* Jonah *on the dry Land*) to believe that the Lord would ſpeak to this Rock to give me with others of my Brethren up; and accordingly, when the Fulneſs of the Time came, I was delivered, even then when we all judged it moſt deſperate: *At Evening it* was *light*. For after the unhappy, raſh and unadviſed Attempts at *Bothwell* of ſome well-meaning People for recovering of their Liberties, and ſhaking off the Yoke of Prelacy, and that our Strength was broken and gone, ſuch of us as were Priſoners expecting every Day when we ſhould be brought out to be a Sacrifice to the Fury they were then in; behold, at that Time did the Lord incline the Heart of the King (out of what Deſign we cannot certainly tell) to grant an Indulgence, and withal to command and order that ſuch Priſoners as were not in Acceſſion

to

to the late Rebellion ſhould be ſet at Liberty, or who were ſentenced merely for Nonconformity: Upon which we were taken out of the *Baſs*, and carried, to the Number of Eight or Nine of us, to the Tolbooth of *Edinburgh*; for tho' the King's Orders did require we ſhould be freely ſet at Liberty, yet would not the Council let us go, until we gave Security to appear when called, under the Penalty of Five hundred and ſixty Pounds. There were about Fourteen of us Priſoners at the Time, and in Twenty four Hours Space we found Security for Eight hundred Pounds; for we would not give Obligement not to riſe in Arms, nor to forbear Field-meetings, becauſe we ſaw no Law for it, and becauſe it was conceived by us diſhonourable, and to reflect upon our Miniſtry. Forth we came, and were ſet at Liberty, to the Joy of our Friends; and, while at Liberty, I preached once every Lord's Day, lived a wandring unſettled Life. Whatever Family I came to, I laboured to be ſomething uſeful there. I looked to my Affairs, paid Two thouſand Merks of Debt at that Time, and ſo continued until *November* 1681, that I with my Cautioners were cited to appear before the Council for preaching, as afterwards ye ſhall hear.

SECT. IV.

Of my ſecond Impriſonment in Edinburgh *and* Blackneſs.

NOW begun Perſecution to increaſe and wax hot againſt Diſſenters; ſome Miniſters were taken and ſent to the *Baſs*; the Liberty the King had given for Preaching, partly be-

becauſe it was not univerſally accepted but by ſome contemned, and partly by the Prelates Perſwaſion, was recalled by the King: And when they had gotten us to forbear Meetings in Fields, in Hope of Liberty to meet in Houſes, the King, who gave his Indulgence but during Pleaſure, recalled and diſcharged his Grant, and ordained the Execution of the Laws againſt Diſſenters; and we, being out of the Road of Field-meetings, could never fall into it again: But tho' we did forbear Field-conventicles, when once they had got us from that, they drove us from Houſe-conventicles too. The Duke of *York*, being then in *Scotland*, did much concur with the Prelates againſt Diſſenters, ſo that never one of us that ever appeared had any Favour ſhown to us; and Diſſenters were as much put to it as ever. Being South, as I returned I preached in a Barn to a good Number of People on a Lord's Day: The Council got Word of this, and it was informed againſt me that I preached in the Fields; ſo that Orders were given to cite me and my Surety both to appear before the Council; but being informed better, and perceiving it was only a Houſe-conventicle, their Citation ſlept, and only ſpoke to my Cautioner who was there, and who ſhort while thereafter, coming North, found me lying ſick of an Ague, and told me how Matters went, and that he was purpoſed to write to the Biſhop of *Edinburgh* and the Lord Advocate concerning my Caſe, and that I was very ſick: Which I earneſtly diſſwaded him from; for I ſaid, If the Prelates hear I am ſick, they will certainly cauſe cite me, in Hopes that either I cannot appear being ſick, and ſo fall in the Forfeiture of

my Bond of Five hundred and ſixty Pounds, which they would gladly be in Hands with; or, if I would appear, I might thereby endanger my Life. This indeed I thought: But my Surety would not be counſelled by me, but acquainted the Biſhop of my Sickneſs, and that I preached not in the Fields. The Biſhop no ſooner received this Letter, and by which he underſtood of my Sickneſs, but incontinently he revives the Citation, his Brother being Clerk to the Council. Some Prejudice they had at my Surety, a Gentleman of good Eſtate, and who was judged ſomething Whiggiſh; for he had been engaged in One thouſand ſeven hundred Pounds *Sterling* for Nonconformiſt Miniſters, and beſides was of a Name very odious to ſome great Men: They thought (as was ſuppoſed) I would not appear being ſick, and the Day of my Appearance in the very dead Time of Winter, the Twenty ſecond of *December*, upon which they would cauſe my Surety forfeit his Bond. A Citation was directed North, of which we heard Word about the Beginning of *November*, and did think fit to prevent the ſame. Many of my Friends counſelled me rather to forfeit the Money than to go, for both they and myſelf had ſome Apprehenſions that the Council intended to have my Life; for it was a Time wherein the Council was in a very bad Humour, and at the very ſame Time had found Lord *Argyll* guilty of Treaſon for that which truly to us, that knew not the Law, ſeemed to have no Affinity therewith, and to ſome of the chief Lawiers of Note likewiſe. Moreover, I knew that Preaching in the Fields was Death by the Law to the Miniſter; and that

the Law declared, That, if any Perſon ſtood without to hear, tho' the Miniſter and Body of the People were within Doors, that ſuch a Meeting was a Field-meeting; and it was impoſſible for me to hinder or know when Perſons were without, and I thought it hard to ſhut Doors upon them, and had not Freedom to do it. And, beſides all this, I was informed ſome Notes of my Sermon were in the Council's Hands, and thereupon intended to ſtage me, and proceſs me criminally; and I knew not what they might make of popular Diſcourſes, tho' never ſo honeſtly meant. All theſe Things made myſelf and Friends have ſome Fear of the Danger of my Life; but notwithſtanding, getting my Head above the Fear of Death and Power of Men, I reſolved upon all Hazards, and to venture to appear; and I was much encouraged in this by my ſudden and unexpected Recovery (and that without any Means) of an Ague that I kept but ſix Weeks in all: I not only recovered, but was ſo ſtrengthned, that I durſt undertake a Journey of ſuch a Length, and ſo bad Way, in the Midſt of Winter; and truly I found the Lord ſo gracious, that tho' I had been ſick ſhort while before, and that the Weather was very bad, yet was I kept from any Prejudice, and came the Day before that of my Appearance to *Edinburgh* in good Health, and my Surety with me: And the Day of my Appearance happened to be the next Day or ſecond after the Earl of *Argyll*'s Eſcape, which did much put them in a bad Humour.

The Council was ſurpriſed (as it ſeemed to me) when I appeared; and, after ſome Aſtoniſhment and Silence, an Indictment was commanded to

be read againſt me, charging me with preaching in the Fields and without Authority, and finally charging me with venting of Principles that were pernicious, ſeditious and rebellious, and tending to alienate the Minds of his Majeſty's Subjects from his Government, and therefore ought to be ſeverely puniſhed to the Terror of others. The Advocate for the King did refer all to my Oath: And being commanded by the Preſident to depone whether I had preached any in Houſes or in Fields ſince I came from the *Baſs*; and a few Days Reſpite to anſwer to the Indictment, which I humbly and earneſtly ſought, in regard that I had a tedious long Journey, bad Weather, long Sickneſs before, and my Spirit diſordered, that I could not give ſo ſatisfying an Anſwer as otherwiſe I would, and that I had come but Yeſterday to Town, and had not Time to conſider the Indictment (having never ſeen the ſame nor heard it till it was read) I ſay, this Reſpite being denied, I told them that I was ready to ſwear that I was innocent of what I was charged with in the Indictment, and therefore deſired I might have Liberty to ſpeak for myſelf; which was granted. Then did I diſcourſe to them a large Half-hour (without being interrupted) in Anſwer to what I was charged with. My Deſign in this was to prevent the Torment of their Queſtions, and likewiſe to ſtate the true Grounds of our Sufferings, and vindicate myſelf and others of the Imputations laid upon us by our Enemies. The Sum of what I ſaid was; After hearty and humble Thanks returned for the Liberty of ſpeaking for myſelf, I proteſted, That I endeavoured to diſcharge what I conceived my Duty with as little Offence

Offence to Authority as I could; and that, were the Things I was called in queſtion about ſuch as I could come and go upon, relating only to my own Perſon or Intereſt in the World, I ſhould be loth to be heard with their Lordſhips, but refer myſelf and theſe Things wholly to their Diſpoſal: That I ſhould be ſhort, ingenuous and clear in my Anſwer for myſelf: That to the firſt and ſecond Head of preaching without Authority and in the Fields, that I had acknowledged I had preached, and was neither aſhamed or terrified to own this; but that I preached not in the Fields ſince I came out of the *Baſs*, nor yet without Authority, ſeeing I was called by God and ſuch of his Servants as I verily did believe had Power from Chriſt for that Effect; and therefore was the firſt Part of my Indictment elided and anſwered: That, as to my preaching ſeditious Principles, I might with a good Conſcience deny it; and, becauſe that both myſelf and others were ſlandered and defamed as Perſons of diſloyal and antimagiſtratical Principles, I ſhould therefore give an Account of what Principles were maintained by myſelf and them, and what my Practices were: That as to Doctrines and dogmatical Points, and Articles of Religion, my Faith was contained in, and according to, the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament; that I was of the reformed Proteſtant Religion, and did approve, and was ready to ſubſcribe to, that Confeſſion of Faith in King *James* his Time, and ratified (I ſuppoſed) by the preſent current Parliament: That as to the King's Majeſty's Authority and Power, that I acknowledged Magiſtracy an Ordinance of God, and *the preſent King's* Authority, whoſe Subject and Servant

Servant I was, and obliged to ſubmit to, reverence and eſteem, whom, for any Thing relating to my Perſon or Eſtate, I never was reſolved to reſiſt; but how far his Power extended, or in what Subject it was firſt placed, or how conveyed, I thought not ſo much my Part as that of Lawiers to determine. For the King's Power in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, I acknowledged the Perſons of Miniſters and other Eccleſiaſtical Perſons ſubject to him; and that he had a Juriſdiction civil, reaching to not only civil, but likewiſe ſpiritual Things, which he was to judge, that ſo he might, as the nurſing Father of the Church, either encourage, or puniſh or reſtrain in a coercive Way, and that not implicitely, relying on the Judgment of or ſeeing with others Eyes; and that he might call Synods when and where he pleaſed, and propoſe his Mind to them, whoſe Duty it not only was, but Wiſdom, to take the Magiſtrate's Concurrence when it might be had: But that it was undeniable, this Power of the Magiſtrate's was not privative of any intrinſical Power of the Church, granted to her by Chriſt, for preſerving and edifying of herſelf; which therefore, in caſe of the Magiſtrate's Oppoſition to the Truth, or want of Acceſs to him thro' Diſtance of Place or other caſual Emergencies, they might exerciſe without him, as was clearly ſeen in the Times of the Heathen, *Arrian* and *Roman* Emperors. That, as to the Government of the Church, it was true that I did not cloſe with that Form of Government by Archbiſhops and Biſhops now eſtabliſhed in the Kingdom, and therefore could never concur with or ſubmit to the ſame *any* manner of Way; but whatever my Diſſatisfaction

faction therewith was, or Oppoſition thereto, I never oppoſed it, but with ſpiritual Weapons. And as for my Practice, I can ſay, I have endeavoured to keep a good Conſcience both before God and Men, to live unblameable, and peaceably, giving *to God what was God's, and to* Ceſar *what was* Ceſar's; was never in any Inſurrection, Rebellion or Conſpiracy againſt his Majeſty's Perſon or Government, nor never ſtirred up others thereto, but rather to live peaceably, and by Repentance, Reformation, Teſtimony for God, Quietneſs and Confidence, and other ſpiritual Means, to expect Deliverance; not by irritating of the Rulers, to make their Bonds heavier, by taking the Sword, and reſiſting by Force; and this both publickly in Sermons, and privately in Diſcourſes. Theſe therefore being our Principles, which we are not aſhamed of, but ready to defend; it is a Wonder to me how I or any ſober Perſon of our Way come to be challenged for ſeditious Principles and Practices, or charged with them. If theſe Principles be innocent, then is the ſecond and great Part of my Libel, referred to my Oath, elided. And finally, I prayed the Lord to bleſs his Majeſty with all his Bleſſings both ſpiritual and temporal; That he might be a Terror to Evil-doers, an Encouragement to the Good; That the Throne might be eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs.

After this Diſcourſe, to which they hearkned very patiently, I was asked, Whether I preach'd ſince I came out of the *Baſs?* To which I replied, I would anſwer to what I was charged with in my Libel or Indictment, which was not that I *preached, but that* I preached without Authority.

ty, and ſeditiouſly; which I did deny. They enquired me very earneſtly and preſſingly, Who ordained me? I told them, I could not be free to tell them, ſeeing it concerned others whom I was not to ſtage; but that I had lawful and good Authority, and that their Lordſhips could not compel me to anſwer to that Matter: Nor judged I myſelf bound to anſwer thereto, becauſe it was *res hactenus judicata*, for which I was formerly queſtioned, and ſatisfied the Law for; and therefore could not now again be called in queſtion for the ſame Fault. And, ſeeing that my Commiſſion to preach was before the Act of Grace, any Crime therein (if any was) was by the Act of Grace purged: And beſides, the ſame not being in any Indictment, I was not bound to anſwer thereto. I was removed; and after ſome Debate among themſelves (for many of the Counſellors were much taken with my Diſcourſe and Defence I made, and voted that I might be let go) the Matter being left to the Biſhops, I was called in, and received the following Sentence; To be ſent to Priſon to *Blackneſs*, and to continue there until I paid the Fine of Five thouſand Merks, and give Security not to preach any more, or go off the Kingdom. And my Guard was ready to convey me to be ſent to the common Jayl of *Edinburgh*, and there to remain.

Many of the By-ſtanders (for there were Multitudes there) were ſurpriſed at the Severity of the Sentence; yea, ſome of the Privy Council talked publickly, that I had met with hard Meaſure. Well, I came to the Jayl, and had a Chamber the beſt in the Priſon; the Keeper and Under-keepers of the Priſon of *Edinburgh* were very

very diſcreet and civil; I had abundance of Viſits every Day from ſome good People and Perſons of Quality. When I firſt came, I examined my Ways and Carriage, and found Matter both of Humiliation and Thankſgiving unto the Lord: I ſaw Ground to bleſs God, that I vindicated the Lord's People from the Aſperſions caſt upon them of bad Principles; I boldly and freely, to the Conviction of all, owned our Principles; and I likewiſe deſired not only to ſpeak for myſelf, but to honour God: I ſaw Ground of Humiliation for many Failings in me, which did confound me; yet was glad if the Goſpel did not receive Prejudice by me. I got little Good done; for I ordinarily ſlept till Seven in the Morning; and after Supper, which was at Eight a-Clock, I was drowſy; and all Day over I was diverted with Viſits: Yet I got my Speech written, and ſome Letters, and preached twice every Lord's Day to the Priſoners, and ſome few who were ſuffered to come in. Twice did I ſupplicate for my Liberty while I was in *Edinburgh*, but could not obtain it, becauſe of the Biſhops and the Clerk of the Council the Biſhop's Brother, who was my great Enemy, tho' I never diſobliged him in my Lifetime.

After I had continued Six Weeks in *Edinburgh*, I was ſent to *Blackneſs*, convoyed by Four or Five Gentlemen of the Guard, where I continued Seven Weeks. Ignorance, Youth, and Fear of Man, made the Governor of this Place not ſo diſcreet as otherwiſe he would be to me: For, *Firſt*, He kept me in a Manner a cloſe Priſoner; another had ſtill the Key of my Chamber, tho' I could command him to come and open it when

I pleaſed, and which was not according to the Council's Order. *Next*, He would be frequently drunk, and then was guilty of ſome Extravagancies; he likewiſe kept back many of my Friends from coming to ſee me, which did pick me at him: And the firſt Night he was ſo indiſcreet, as to put me into a gouſty, cold, wide, dark, filthy, ſmoky Room, where I could not have lived Six Days, if I had therein continued, for Smoke, Darkneſs, Melancholly and Cold, altho' at the ſame he had better Rooms; but his Lady tho' a Child not above Fourteen Years, and another Gentleman that came along with me, prevailed ſo far with him as to change my Room, and then was I very well. Here I continued Seven Weeks, doing little Good, but longing and praying for Deliverance out of that ſad Place; which the Lord thus brought to paſs: My Brother-in-law, unknown to me, preſented a Supplication to the Council in my Behalf, deſiring my Fine might be remitted, myſelf ordered to be ſet at Liberty, ſome competent Time allowed me to ſettle my Affairs in *Scotland*, ſeeing I was content to ſubmit to their Lordſhips Sentence of Baniſhment. Which Supplication (the Duke of *York* and Biſhop with his Brother being away and gone to *England*) was eaſily granted by the Council: An Order was ſent to the Governor of *Blackneſs* immediately to ſet me at Liberty, a Month was given me to ſettle my Affairs; whereupon I was much ſooner than I thought ſet at Liberty, and at a Time when I little thought of it, and my Liberty burdened with no Clog or ſinful Engagement by my Cautioner, who only bound that I ſhould remove out of the Kingdom (and not return

without

without King or Council's Leave) within ſuch a Day.

SECT. V.

Of my Baniſhment.

I Did not know any Thing of what my Friends had done for me, nor could blame them for what they had done: The Terms were honeſt upon which I was to come out; Liberty was deſirable, tho' in a ſtrange Country, and preferable to Impriſonment at Home. I looked upon wicked Folk, tho' *Scotſmen*, as the greateſt Aliens, Foreigners and Strangers to me; a godly Man in *England* or *Ireland* is more my Countryman than a wicked *Scotſman*. Beſides, by being at Liberty, I ſhould be in greater Capacity to glorify the Lord than under Reſtraint, where I could not ſee a godly Perſon, nor be anywiſe uſeful ſave by a few Letters. And I ſaw much of the Mercy of God, that without paying a Fine, or engaging to any ſinful Terms, the Council ſhould have given Orders for my Liberation.

But notwithſtanding of all this, when I thought upon my Caſe, Baniſhment was grievous and burdenſom to me: Shall I leave then (ſaid I) my native Country? ſhall I leave, and never ſee Mother, Children, Brethren, Siſters, and kindly Friends and Relations, and ſpend the Reſidue of my Days among Strangers, to whom I will be as a Barbarian? What Care will they take of me? how ſhall I be maintained? Will any little Thing, that after Payment of Debts my Eſtate can ſpare, be ſufficient for me to live upon in a Place where all Things are at a dear Rate? Truly all thoſe Conſiderations, and ſuch like,

did

priſoned in *Newgate* for ſix Months, for Refuſing the *Oxford* Oath.

SECT. VI.

Of my third Impriſonment.

UPON the 20th or 21ſt *July* 1683, about the Time that a Plot againſt the King's Perſon and Government was diſcovered, and ſome three or four Days after my Lord *Ruſſel's* Execution; at Ten a'Clock I was expeding a certain Buſineſs with a Gentleman in *Cheapſide*, and one Mr. *A.* one of the King's Meſſengers, ſearching for ſuſpected Perſons in that very Houſe where I was, and particularly for one Mr. *Sands*, meeting me as I came down, and knowing me to be a Stranger, and ſuſpecting me as ſome diſaffected Perſon, did preſently ſecure me by a Conſtable, and brought me to his own Houſe, kept me cloſs Priſoner ſome five or ſix Hours, and thereafter brought me before ſome of the Council: There were the King, the Duke of *York*, L. *K.* L. *S.* and ſome others I know not. After ſome frivolous immaterial Queſtions relating to my Nation, and when I came here, where I lodged, and ſome others of that Nature, I was ask'd, What I knew or heard of a Plot againſt his Majeſty at any Time? I replied, That I knew nothing of a Plot againſt his Majeſty's Perſon or Government, nor heard any Thing but what was diſcovered ſince that Plot did break out, nor knew nor heard any Thing I could make them the wiſer by; That I was no publick Perſon, nor Frequenter of Cabals or Coffee-houſes; That I know not any one Perſon, either Accuſers or Accuſed, in that Plot; That I always lived peaceably, and

was

was never acceſſory to any Plot or Inſurrection that ever was; That in my Judgment (which I declared) I was againſt all violent Attempts againſt his Majeſty or Government; and that it was not likely any who had ſuch Deſigns, knowing my Principles, would communicate ought to me of it; yea, that I always ſhunn'd Diſcourſes of that Nature: Thereafter I was ask'd by his Majeſty, What I judged of the Archbiſhop of *St. Andrews*'s Murder, whether I judged it ſo or not? I anſwered, That for myſelf I had no Acceſſion thereto, but was very grieved when I heard it; and I would not juſtify or have had any Hand in it for the whole World: So for me to condemn it as (and to declare it) Murder, was I not free; for being a Doer of the Law only, and not a Judge of the Law, I conceived it as out of my Sphere to give Judgment of another Perſon's Actions, whether they were Murderers or not: That this I confeſſed belonged to his Majeſty and Officers of Juſtice, who were Judges of the Law, but to me it did not; eſpecially being a Stranger to the Fact, and legal Evidences of the Nature, Manner and Circumſtances of the ſame not being adduced, it was hard for me or any Perſon to give Judgment one Way or other of the ſaid Fact. And for my Thoughts of it, that God had appointed a ſolemn Court at the laſt Day for judging of Actions, Words and Thoughts, before which Court alone it was competent (I thought) to give Account of Thoughts; and therefore, referring myſelf as to my Thoughts to that Court only, I was not free to give Account to any human Judicatory whatever of them; to whom yet I heartily ſubmitted in the Expreſſions and Actions

to

to be judged. And finally, Tho' I was not afraid his Majeſty knew what were my Thoughts in the Matter, yet would not be a Precedent to any of his Subjects to be made to give an Account of Thoughts judicially, eſpecially relating to other Perſons; and therefore to have me excuſed. Then the King was pleaſed to ask me, Whether I judged myſelf bound by the Solemn League and Covenant? and whether I thought there was any Thing of moral Obligation therein? I anſwered, That, for my Part, I never took that Covenant, nor was it ever tendered to me; but what was of moral Import in it, I judged I was bound thereto, altho' I myſelf never took it; and that, however the Words of the Decalogue and the Covenant were not the ſame, yet might the Covenant be reduced to it, as materially the ſame with the Decalogue: That I remembred two chief Articles of the Covenant, the one was *Reformation of our Hearts and Lives according to the Word of God*; and this I thought might be eaſily reduced to every Precept of the Decalogue, each of which tied us to Reformation and Repentance: Another Article I conceived to be in the Covenant was, That we ſhould *maintain and defend the King's juſt Privileges, his Perſon and Government*; and this, as I judged, might eaſily be reduced to the Decalogue; ſo did I judge myſelf by the Word of God, Laws of the Land, yea, and Covenant itſelf, tho' never taken by me perſonally, bound to. After this I was ask'd ſome Queſtions concerning my Acquaintance with ſeveral Perſons, as Mr. *Fergusſon*, the *Ceſnocks*, Mr. *Munro*, Mr. *Baillie* of *Jerviſwood* and others; to which I gave

a true, full, ingenuous Anſwer, and was after commanded to remove. What were their Thoughts of me, I know not; but it ſeems they were ſatisfied I was not in the Plot, nor could tell them ought of it, and that I dealt ingenuouſly with them; and yet were not willing to let me go ſo, but referred me to the Lord Mayor, and ordered him to put the Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy and *Oxford* Oath to me.

The next Day therefore I appeared before the Lord Mayor, and was much grieved and troubled that my Trials ſhould be ſtated on the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy: For I had neither Clearneſs to take them both, eſpecially the Oath of Supremacy; nor yet was I ſo willing to ſuffer upon the account of refuſing them, as being a dark Caſe to me. But, when the Meſſenger told me I was ordered to take the three Oaths, my Heart was very glad, as being very clear to ſuffer for refuſing the *Oxford* Oath; wherein a Man is bound, beſides other Things, not to endeavour to make any Alteration in the Government either in State or Church, which I thought hard to ſwallow. Wherefore, when asked by my Lord Mayor, whether I would take the ſaid Oaths, after I had asked whether Queen *Eliſabeth*'s Explication might be read to me, and propoſed ſome Reaſons why I conceived myſelf not bound by Law to take the ſaid Oaths, and overruled therein; at laſt my Anſwers did iſſue in this, That as for the Oath of Allegiance, I was willing to take it, ſo that it would end the Strife; for the Oath of Supremacy, I demurred upon it, until I adviſed better; and for the *Oxford* Oath, I *ſimpliciter* refuſed it preſently: But, if I had not

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Benefit by the Oath of Allegiance, I would take none of them at all; and in the mean Time desired, if they committed me, to do it upon refusing the *Oxford* Oath: Which carried by the Lord Mayor's Indulgence, and Sir *J. E.* who spake in my Favours very much against the common Serjeant's Mind, who press'd much that I should be committed for refusing all the Oaths. So an Order was drawn, and I sent to *Newgate*.

In *Newgate* I continued six lunary Months, or Twenty four Weeks. Here I had Experience of the Lord's Goodness and Mercy, which did never leave me: I had, short while after I came, one of the best Rooms in the Prison, in which any Person might lodge; a large, cleanly, lightsom, square Room it was, and off the Ground as ye come in: The Captain and Under-keepers were all very civil to us, carrying both wisely and discreetly: I kept my Health very well *all the* Time I was there: We had comfortable Fellowship with Fellow-prisoners, who might see one another all Day; some I perceived notional, unlearned, yet obstinate: I stood at the greatest Distance with Free-willers; but such as I had greatest Converse with were these of our own Persuasion, who were truly the most sober and learned that were there. In general, I found all of them civil: We were abundantly refreshed and supplied by Numbers of all Ranks and Persuasions (save *Quakers*) that came in to see us: We wanted nothing. So that I could hardly call it Suffering. [illegible] this was sad to us, and which made me [illegible]ous to be gone and at Liberty, That, 1. We [illegible]no Occasion of doing Good to others, for we [illegible]hed none while there; for we were not

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ſuffered, nor others to come in to us. 2. It was grievous to me eſpecially, that I had no Occaſions nor Opportunities for Retirement; for having a Chamber-fellow with me, and all Day oppreſs'd with Viſitants, I could not in the Twenty four Hours command one for myſelf: Wherefore I did little or no Good here, and got as little; only I gave my Teſtimony for Chriſt, and had Experience of the Lord's Goodneſs. When the Number of my Weeks were fulfilled, I was without further Work put at Liberty, the Turnkey getting Word only from the Captain to ſet me at Liberty, and let me out when I pleaſed. So taking my Leave of the Captain, and thanking him for his Civilities, I came out; my Expences in all not reaching above Twenty Pounds.

SECT. VII.

Obſervations upon my Sufferings.

(1.) THAT ſuch as will live godly in the World muſt and will ſuffer Perſecution, for the Trial and Exerciſe of their Faith and Patience, purging away of their Droſs, and for weaning their Hearts from a preſent World, and for Confirmation of the Truth; 2 *Tim.* iii. 12. 1 *Pet.* iv. 12. *John* xv. 3. (2.) Altho' at ſome Times there be more or leſs of Perſecution, yet there is no Time in which the Saints ſhall be without daily Croſſes; for a wicked World will perſecute with the Tongue, even in *Abraham*'s Family, where Piety did obtain, *Gal.* iv. 28, 29. *Gen.* xxi. 9. Even when Religion was favoured, I found Perſecution by Reproach, and Contempt of wicked Men. (3.) There are ſome ſpecial Days of Perſecution, when Hell breaks

looſe, and when great Trials come, which are called *the Hour of Tentation*, and *the evil Day*, *the Hour and Power of Darkneſs*, Rev. iii. 10. Eph. vi. 13. Luke viii. 13, 22, 25. (4.) The Lord *ſtayeth his rough Wind in the Day of his Eaſt-wind*, Iſa. xxvii. 9. He many Times puts an End to the Extremities of his Peoples perſonal Trials ere he exerciſes with publick Sufferings; he *lays not on* Men *more than is meet*, and therefore ſuffers not a Multitude of Evils to ly upon his poor People at once, 1 *Cor.* x. 10. (5.) God firſt (I find) ordinarily exerciſes with perſonal Afflictions, ere he call them to Sufferings on account of Chriſt, that, being exerciſed with the one, they may better bear the other. (6.) I find that the Lord doth many Times affright us with Troubles which never come upon us, as he did to *Nineveh*; and we are made to fear that which the Mercy of God never ſuffers to touch us, *Jonah* i. 3. (7.) But ſeldom or never doth a great perſonal or publick Stroke come upon the Lord's People, but he gives them ſome Warning and Notice of it before-hand, that we be not ſurpriſed, but prepared for it, *Zeph.* ii. 1, 2, 3, 4. (8.) Obſtinacy in Sin and Impenitency, and the removing of Gods precious People, with Security under this, have had greateſt Influence upon my Fears of a Day of Deſolation, *Iſa.* lvii. 12. *Ezek.* xi. 3, 4. *Iſa.* ix. 4, 5. (9.) Our Fears, Unbeliefs and Diſcouragements, with our Confuſions, are our greateſt Troubles in a Day of Trouble; 'tis a Priſon within a Priſon, *Pſal.* cxlii. O *bring my Soul out of Trouble.* Our galled ſore Backs made our Burdens more grievous to us, Sin and Unbelief are bad Ballaſt in a Storm.

Storm. (10.) The Croſs of Chriſt, when we once engage with it, is nothing ſo terrible, is nothing ſo heavy as at a Diſtance in Apprehenſion it is: How dreadful did a Priſon and appearing before Synagogues appear to me! But, when I did encounter therewith, I found it nothing ſo terrible to me. (11.) I was never in that Trouble yet upon the Account of Chriſt, but I was delivered out of it by the Lord, and that when it ſeemed very deſperate to look for Salvation, *Pſal.* xxxiv. 25. *The Troubles of the Righteous are many, but the Lord delivereth out of them all.* We are to believe Deliverance from all our Troubles, tho' we cannot tell when or how. (12.) Nothing contributes more to a Chriſtian Carriage under Trouble, than Faith of God's Support in and Deliverance out of Trouble, *Ja.* v. 7, 8. Unbelief ſinks the Heart. (13.) It is Matter of great Humiliation to us, that our Troubles and Afflictions do us but little Good ſometimes, that we are ſo unfruitful under the Rod: And eſpecially I obſerve, that ſmall Troubles have but ſmall Influence; every Phyſick doth not work with ſtrong Conſtitutions. My lighter Troubles, whether upon a perſonal or more publick Account, I found but little Good by them: It was a deep Heart-reaching Stroke that did me Good: And in Times of greateſt Fears, ſharpeſt Afflictions, it was ever ſtill beſt with me; and at firſt Afflictions do not ſo much Good, it is afterwards that they reap *the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs*, Heb. xii. And, even when the Lord bleſſes them to do Good, the Fruit alas is but ſmall; we are not ſo good under them as we ought to be or might. (14.) I have obſerved, the

more the Lord's People are afflicted and perſecuted, the more they grow; and the Goſpel never thrives better than when it is perſecuted, *Exod.* i. 12. *Phil.* i. 12. Such Things as happened to me, have been *for the Furtherance of the Goſpel.* All the Malice of Men could never have broken us, if we had not undone ourſelves; they *plowed with* our *Heifer:* For the ſpreading of the Goſpel was the Effect of a long Time of their greateſt Severities. (15.) Perſecutors are ungodly, are cruel, are deceitful; and this did I ſee evidently, all Perſecutors have theſe three Properties: And therefore let us beware of ſuch Perſons, and keep at the utmoſt Diſtance with them, and expect no Good from them; let us not lean on them who ſmite us; let us ſuſpect all their Favours, for *the Kiſſes of an Enemy are deceitful*; but let *our Eyes* be *only to the Lord.* (16.) Too great Love, Reſpect to, Intimacy and Communion with wicked Men, and not ſtanding at due Diſtance with them, provokes the Lord to give his People into the Hands of the Wicked. The *Iſraelites* wicked Confederacy with the *Canaanites* made them *Briers and Thorns in* their *Sides*; had we carried to the Ungodly as we ought to have done, we ſhould not have ſmarted as we do this Day. (17.) 'Tis a very great Comfort to a godly Perſon, that his Perſecutors and Enemies are God's Enemies, and wicked Perſons: *Let my Enemies be as the Wicked,* ſaith *Job.* We may expect good Hearing from God againſt them. It doth much likewiſe to determine us in our Duties, that what they are for muſt be ill, and what they are againſt muſt be good: And, notwithſtanding of the Confidence of ſome Compliers, it is ſtrange

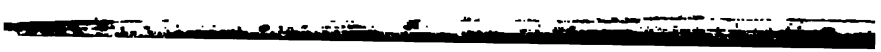
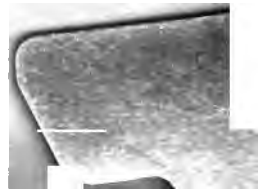
that

that in almoſt Six thouſand Years one Inſtance from Scripture or authentick Hiſtory cannot be given. (18.) Under publick Sufferings we are moſtly called to Submiſſion and Patience, both in reference to God and Men; *In Patience poſſeſs your Souls:* And to Chriſtian Cheerfulneſs. O what a comely Thing is it to ſee a meek Sufferer, like the Maſter, *not opening his Mouth*, but *dumb as a Sheep* is *before the Shearer!* And how ordinarily do Men fall in this great Sin of Impatience? And Cheerfulneſs under the Croſs of Chriſt is no leſs beautiful; and therefore how frequent ſuch Precepts and Examples, to *glory, rejoice in Tribulation?* For this gives a good Report of Chriſt, his Cauſe and Croſs to others. (19.) Sufferings on publick Accounts are not only our Duty, but our great Privilege; to ſuffer for Chriſt, is one of Chriſt's Love-gifts, *Phil.* i. ult. *'Tis given you to ſuffer for the Name of Chriſt.* To give Teſtimony for Chriſt and his Truth, is our greateſt Honour: A Sufferer and Witneſs for Chriſt is the moſt honourable Perſon and Officer in the Kingdom of Chriſt; 'tis Chriſt's higheſt and honourableſt Employment, *Acts* v. *They rejoiced they were counted worthy to ſuffer Shame for Chriſt.* (20.) Reproach and Shame, and Ill-will of Men, is the heavieſt of Chriſt's Croſſes to bear; *Reproach hath broken my Heart*, ſaith *David.* (21.) 'Tis the great Guilt of Profeſſors this Day, that they not only ſhun the Ways of God, but are aſhamed of them, and of the Croſs of Chriſt, yea, and of the Truths of Chriſt; of ſuch will Chriſt be aſhamed. (22.) 'Tis a very hard Matter to get our Sufferings ſtated upon Chriſt's Account, but yet it is very neceſſary we get it done;

for

for many Objections doth a poor ſuffering Soul meet with in this Caſe, as poſſibly not ſo clear to many as the Matter of the Sufferings of Chriſtians under Heathens, and of Proteſtants under Papiſts: Nor is the Call to ſuch a Thing clear at ſuch a Time; ſome ſinful Acceſſion of our own (thro' want of Conſideration or Miſtake) to our Trouble, Senſe of Guilt and Unworthineſs, doth render our Cauſe dark to us many Times: That as it was ſaid of theſe, *Ye did not faſt to me*; ſo may it be ſaid to us, Ye ſuffer not to me, nor for me, but for your Sins and yourſelves. (23.) Outward Trouble from the Hands of Perſecutors may be both a Rod and Correction for Sin, and a Teſtimony for Chriſt and his Truth: The Lord Jeſus may by one Rod deſign both the Correction and Chaſtiſement of his Church and People, and likewiſe deſign a Confirmation and Witneſs to his Truth, Cauſe and Work. *Heb.* xii. 12. the publick Sufferings of the Believing *Hebrews* were *Chaſtiſements for our Profit.* (24.) We by our Sins therefore may provoke the Lord to deliver us into the Hands of Men, and by our Weakneſs we may have ſome ſinful Hand and Occaſion thereto, and great Failings attending our Sufferings; and yet Chriſt accept of our Sufferings, ſo maimed, as a Teſtimony for him. (25.) Whatever Pretext wicked Perſecutors make of afflicting God's People, and that they be ſchiſmatick, ſcandalous, ſeditious, that they walk diſorderly; yet the true Ground of their Quarrel is becauſe of their Enmity to God and Godlineſs; and therefore we may be aſſured we ſuffer for Chriſt and for his Cauſe: *All theſe Things will they do unto you, becauſe the Love of the Father is not in them.* And *David* ſaith, that all his Enemies Quarrel with him was, *becauſe* he *followed* after *that which was good.* 'Tis the Enmity that is between the Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman, *Gen.* iii. 15. *Mat.* xxiii. 33. *Jo.* xv. 19, 21. (26.) I obſerve, that the Lord doth accept of the faithful Ends and Endeavours, and honeſt Intention and Zeal of his People, when the Methods, and particular Means and Courſes they take for witneſſing for Chriſt, are ſome-

times not altogether juſtifiable; as he who ſcruples thro' want of Light an Oath in itſelf lawful, out of Zeal for the Glory of God which he fears by taking this Oath he wrongs, and thereupon ſuffers, this Man's Sufferings are accepted of Chriſt as a Teſtimony for him. (27.) The Controverſy this Day is as manifeſtly ſtated betwixt Chriſt and the Devil, Sin and Godlineſs, whether the World ſhould be Chriſt's Subjects, or the Devil's and Sin's Subjects, as ever it was. The ſmaller Differences, tho' in themſelves of no great Conſequence, yet centre in this great Gulf of Rebellion againſt God. To touch any Thing belonging to this wicked Generation, Chriſt's ſtated Enemies, or to have ought ado with them, is dangerous, *Numb.* xvi. 26. and they are the Emiſſaries of *Satan*, and doing his Work, who plead for Union and Compliance with them. (28.) Yet ought not the Miſcarriages of Superiors diſſolve the civil or natural Bonds of Relation to them, *Mat.* xxiii. 1, 2. We are to do and be ſubmiſſive to the Commands of Superiors, tho' we be not to imitate their Practice. (29.) Man's Wrath, and all Perſecution, ſhall tend and work to the Praiſe of God, and the Good of Saints, *Pſal.* lxxvi. 10. *Iſa.* xxxi. 10. and this is a marvellous Conſolation. (30.) Many a Time may we in a publick Stroke of Perſecution ſee our Sin and Guilt clearly and legibly written, as in *Adonibezek*, Judges i. & *Gen.* xix. Such as burn'd with unnatural Luſt to one another, are juſtly conſumed with Fire from Heaven: And 'tis juſt that Lovers, whom we preferred to Chriſt, be the Inſtruments of our greateſt Trouble. (31.) Many Times do the People of God find great Favour and Kindneſs at the Hands of natural Men, yea, and more ſometimes than from the truly Godly: The Earth helped the Woman many Times. I found ſome Profeſſors of Religion ſtood at greater Diſtance with me, than did mere natural and graceleſs Perſons. (32.) The Preſervation of ſome, of a Remnant in a Day of Straits, is exceeding wonderful and marvellous ſometimes. (33.) *The Wicked are ſnared in the Work of their own Hands*, Pſal. ix. and *Hamans* hanged on their own

own Gallows: The Lord makes the Weapons of the Wicked recoil on themſelves; every Mean for a good While they take in Hand, doth but weaken them, and increaſe the other Party. (34.) 'Tis the People of God that only can undo and harm themſelves; and 'tis by Diviſion that it is done: While we ſtood in one Spirit, we could not be overcome or prevail'd againſt; but falſe Brethren crept in amongſt us, divided and broke us thro' the Subtilty of Adverſaries, and did draw us to raſh Enterpriſes. (35.) The greateſt Conſolations do attend the greateſt Tribulations, 2 *Cor.* i. 5, 6. (36.) The firſt Brunt of the Croſs is ſaddeſt and ſharpeſt; *No Affliction for the preſent ſeemeth joyous, but grievous.* (37.) Great outward Troubles, whether perſonal or on publick Accounts, quicken and revive our Apprehenſions of Eternity. (38.) And always do us Good; tho' not alike Good to all, nor ſo ſenſibly, yet no Croſs but we get ſome Good of it. (39.) I found it very hard to appear before Councils, and carry rightly. We ſeek rather to ſave ourſelves in any lawful Way, than to honour and give Teſtimony for Chriſt; and there is not Boldneſs, and Dependence on Chriſt for Aſſiſtance. (40.) There is not ſo much of the *Spirit of Glory reſting upon* Sufferers, as hath been formerly: Which I think flows from theſe three; 1. That our Teſtimony for Chriſt is not ſo glorious; 2. That a ſadder Shock is coming; and, *Laſtly*, That our Sufferings are ſo moderate. (41.) Yet, bleſſed be the Lord, for my part I have found the Lord in a ſpecial Way with me in all my Sufferings, and I never repent of any Thing I have ſuffered for Chriſt. (42.) Tho' the Lord can ſanctify and bleſs any Lot to his People, yet, to ſpeak abſolutely, an afflicted Condition in the World is beſt for God's People. (43.) The infinite Condeſcendence of God, and his gracious and tender Nature, is that only which can be a Bottom to our Faith; to believe we ſuffer for Chriſt, and as ſuch to be accepted and look'd upon by him. (44.) There is a large Allowance for Sufferers for Righteouſneſs; but many live not upon their Allowance, and therefore look ſo ill upon it.

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